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S E R M O N S

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Y O U N G M E N.

By WILLIAM DODD, LL.D.
Prebendary of Brecon, and Chaplain in Ordinary
to His MAJESTY.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. KNOX, and T. CADELL, in
the Strand. MDCC LXXII.

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*Flee also youthful Lusts: but follow Righteous-
ness, Faith, Charity, Peace, with them that
call on the Lord out of a pure Heart.*

2 Tim. ii. 22.



SERMON IX.

On Ridicule.

PART I.

PROVERBS xiv. 9.

Fools make a mock at Sin.

THE Christian religion is, with great force and propriety, stiled a warfare; and Christians are exhorted, as “good Soldiers of Christ,” continually to stand upon their defence, clothed with the whole armour of God, against the various attacks of their enemies. Indeed, so numerous are those enemies, and so diversified and subtle the methods by which the flesh and the spirit, the world and the devil, are continually labouring to sap the foundation, and overthrow the structure of a Christian’s virtue, that there is no less need of the divine Pano-
ply, than of all the caution and attention, which the best prudence and wisdom can suggest.

Solicitous for your welfare, my young hearers, I have pointed out some of those

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perils, which will meet you, in your Christian course; some of those snares, which lie in the way, to entangle your incautious feet: And particularly, when setting before you the dangers and evils of Bad Company, I touched slightly upon a topic, which, from its importance, certainly demands a more ample discussion*: For RIDICULE is not only the choicest instrument of impious folly to decry religious truth and virtue; but its effect is frequently most fatal to that truth and virtue.

Surely, then, it is well worth our while to inquire into its nature and force; to examine this mighty Goliath of the Philistines; that we may learn wherein its strength lies, and wherefore it should strike such a terror into the armies of the Living God. Some, indeed, have urged, that this is the alone potent spell, whereby to prove truth of every kind; and they triumphantly urge, "That whatever will not stand the test of Ridicule, must unquestionably be branded with falsehood and contempt." We will try the force of this position, and see whether the assertion

* See Vol. i. p. 216.

of the wise King of Israel deserves not an equal acceptation; namely, "That mockery at sin, and its consequences, is a proof, not of wisdom, but of the veriest folly."

Now, in order to treat this subject most for your improvement, and the better to guard you against the attacks of this strong weapon of fools, We will consider,

FIRST, Who they are that use it.

SECONDLY, Against what, and why, they use it: And

THIRDLY, We will shew, what it is they use; or, in other words, what is the real force and genuine power of Ridicule.

I. First then we are to consider, "Who they are that make use of Ridicule;" strongly characterized by the sacred writer before us, under the appellation of "Fools." And if, indeed, they were fools only in the strict sense of the word, who made use of it, it could never be worth while to employ a

moment's thought upon the subject. But in the days of the wise man, a religious reverence to God and his laws was held in such high and just esteem, that "Wisdom" was the term commonly applied to Religion; and on the other hand, Vice and Profaneness were stigmatized by the contemptible name of FOLLY. So that, in the language of revelation (how different from that of modern times!) religious men and wise men, are one and the same*; and by fools are meant not those to whom nature hath denied an extensive reach of understanding; but those whom their own corrupt wills and inclinations have deprived of just thinking and acting. By fools, therefore, in the text, are meant "The wicked and irreligious;" men of corrupt principles and practice: Such as those marked out by the apostle; who, "giving themselves up to all kinds of vice and lasciviousness, think it strange that others run not with them to the same excess of riot, and therefore speak evil of them †."

* See Clark's Sermons, Vol. ii. Sermon. 7.

† See 1 Pet. iv. 5. and Stillingfleet's Sermon on the Folly of mocking at Religion.

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Now it is certainly well worth a serious man's while to inquire, how far it becomes him to be influenced by any thing which men of this character can urge or advance. Whatever irrational enthusiasts may say *, it is an unquestionable truth, "That a desire to stand fair in the good opinion of our fellow-creatures, is a principle engrafted in our nature; in many respects beneficial to ourselves and others." And though it is equally unquestionable, that every hope and desire hereof, is to be given up, if at any time it comes in competition with the favour of God; whom it is a first maxim of Christian truth, that we are to please and obey, rather than men; yet, second to this important maxim, we can never too carefully cultivate the esteem and love of those, with whom we are by any means connected in society.

But, if those with whom we are connected, not only break that first obligation to God themselves, but are desirous that we should do the same; if they not only run the greatest lengths of riot, but use every method of

* See Wesley's first Journal.

seduction to allure us to the like destructive course ; we are certainly bound, not only to give up the desire of pleasing, but to oppose ourselves as much as may be, to their vicious examples and arguments. For no man can have any claim to our esteem, much less can he merit our imitation, who, void of those principles which lead to present and to future happiness, would shamefully incite us to make shipwreck of both. There is an attraction in virtue and goodness, which (separate from all private considerations) always draws to itself the mind's esteem ; as is plainly proved, by the general attachment to those characters, in the most distant ages and remotest countries, who have made themselves immortal in the memories of men, by their virtuous and upright deeds. And this arises, not only from the universal idea of the beauty and loveliness of virtue ; but from the opinion we have, that such virtue is the fruit of a just discernment, while it is always productive of happy consequences to those within the reach of its exertion. Just for the contrary reasons, vicious characters, equally indifferent to us as to their good or

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evil, are esteemed odious and abominable by us: We know them evil; we think them weak: We are assured that their bad practices were injurious and offensive.

Now, upon the foundation of this reasoning, and these feelings of our nature, we may surely learn to scorn and despise all the mockery and ridicule of vicious and irreligious characters amongst ourselves. The love and esteem of such characters can never be desired; for it would necessarily imply a similarity of disposition and manners: And the contempt or abuse of such characters can never be important, because it is certain they have not, they cannot have any just idea or estimate of things; they cannot have liberal or enlarged minds;—They cannot have that which alone can make human applause of real weight and use; they cannot have an estimation for our religion and our virtue, or an extended view to that true glory, which all the lovers of God are seeking, as the object of their first and grand pursuit.

Like will ever follow like: And if you are convinced that a regard to God and his laws,

that truth, virtue, holiness, are right and good; the infallible tests of a sound mind, and well informed understanding; that, in short, this is the only wisdom;—You must not be at all surprized, that they who pursue a plan diametrically opposite, will charge you with absurdity and folly; for fools of this stamp, are always extremely “wise in their own conceit.” You must not wonder, that, incapable through their ignorance, and deficiency in true wisdom, to reason and to argue, they shoot the bolt of folly; and apply to that mockery and Ridicule, which is the grand succedaneum in little minds, to the want of true discernment and rational argumentation.

Nor, in this view, will you ever be moved; as perfectly satisfied, that good sense and right discernment are, and must be, the prerogative of those minds only, who (purifying themselves from all the gross and incumbering fogs of impiety and vice) see amidst the brightness of all-irradiating, divine light, the path in which they should go, and the end of the journey at which they should aim,

The esteem and approbation of men like these, is just as valuable and important; (a kind of foretaste and anticipation of His esteem, whose judgment is unclouded brightness, no less than crowning happiness) their esteem is just as valuable, as the scorn and ridicule of the vicious and profane is despicable and every way unworthy a wise man's thought and attention,

II. But we shall see this more fully, by considering, in the Second place, "What it is, that men of this character ridicule."

The sacred writer before us calls it by the general name of Sin: By which we may well understand "Vice in general, with all its circumstances:" As if the wise man had said, "Foolish and impious men treat of vice, with all its odious and destructive consequences, in a light and mocking manner; ridiculing every thing serious and sacred, and speaking of their vicious and abominable ways with levity and laughter." And experience does but too much confirm the truth of the observation. Go out into the world, and you will find this

the precise and distinct character of the profane and irreligious. They ridicule things the most sacred; they treat with levity things the most serious. A religious man becomes the object of their sport and mockery; not because they have entered into the nature of his principles, or can prove them weak, erroneous, and delusive; but because those principles are in immediate contradiction to their own, and throw a living and irresistible reproach on their minds and their manners. Hence they dare to call a conscientious fear and regard to the Deity, by the name of Cowardice and pusillanimity; a strict and necessary attention to the great positive duties of religion, they are bold enough, in their mad mockery, to brand with the hateful name of Hypocrisy: While an attachment to the moral duties, and a studious care to avoid all impropriety, indecency, and excess, is stigmatized with the scornful terms of Moroseness, severity, and unsociableness: —Reproaches these, which are of all others felt most sharply by the human mind. And from hence it is, perhaps, (amongst other reasons) that the force of Ridicule is found to be so strong; insomuch that the

human mind, in various instances, better supports persecution and punishment, and all the pains and torments of the body, than the pointed shafts of keen and well-directed Ridicule†. Coward, Hypocrite, Unsociable, are terms, reflecting upon that part of our character which we hold most dear, and from which we expect the highest esteem amongst our fellow creatures, and the truest satisfaction to ourselves; and therefore to become by the brand of these disgusting appellations, objects for the slow and moving finger of contempt, is frequently more than minds not endued with the greatest Christian fortitude, can support. But, as we have shewn that the objects who throw this Ridicule, are on every account beneath our regard, and can never move a reflecting man; so let us a little develope the charges here brought, and see whether they are more deserving that regard.

(1.) You are called "A coward," because you fear God. Now, this is so far from

† Persecution and Hatred have PITY annexed to them: None is annexed to Ridicule and Contempt.

being a true charge, that the only man of true courage is he who does fear God. For courage is not the bare insensibility of danger, or the brutal effort of ferocity and inconsideration. Were this the case, lions and tigers would deprive the less furious animal man of all applause from this virtue. True courage is "the calm and settled resolution of a virtuous mind; wise to foresee, cautious to prevent, firm to encounter dangers, and ready in all events, to acknowledge and submit to him, who is the Lord God Almighty:" Who, with one volition, can crush into atoms the whole system of created nature, and before whom worlds are but as the fly that wantons in the summer's beam.

And can it be Courage, with blind and brutal madness to oppose ourselves to a God thus irresistible in power and glory? Can it be courage, by the most atrocious violation of his laws, to dare his justice, and arm his terrible vengeance against us? Can it be courage, to oppose our feeble strength to his thundering right hand, or to make Him our implacable Foe, who would exert his sove-

reign majesty, to clothe us as his Friends, with righteousness and honor?—Yet, this is the courage, which the hardy veterans of impiety boast. O my young friends! Let them triumph in such daring deeds of destruction: May it be Your's, for ever to be cowards in such a cause! Bold, and undaunted as lions in the cause of truth and of virtue (the shield of Omnipotence stretch'd over your heads;) may you shrink with the most trembling timidity from the perpetration of all those actions, which disgrace the man, and dare his maker! may you, like the virtuous Patriarch of old, never be afraid to throw it in the face of Vice itself, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!”

Fear is well defined by the preacher, “A betraying of the succours, which reason offereth:” And if so, there can be no such cowards as those, who, in contempt of the succours which true reason supplies, rush headlong to the performance of deeds, whose sure end is destruction. There can be no men so truly courageous as those, who fear

only where reason withholds her succours; and who never fear where that reason gives the commanding word, “ Be bold, and fear God !”

(2.) But the vicious attach religious men, not of cowardice only, but of “ Hypocrisy ;” a heavy charge, it must be allowed, were it urged with truth, and could it be proved with certainty. For as no vice is more justly odious both to God and man, than hypocrisy; so they, who truly incur the censure of it, merit the utmost contempt, not of the vicious only, but of the virtuous also; nay, of virtue and religion itself, upon whose cause, in general, they bring a reproach and scandal. However, it should be observed, that while serious and pious persons are ever liable to this imputation, and ever marked with this title by the vicious and profane, there is, and there ever will be, an eternal and immutable difference between real and dissimulated piety: And though they may and must agree in many particulars, yet the parting point between them is no less clear and determined, than it is, for the most part, the

object of no human discernment. The truth and sincerity of a man's religion and virtue, is to be estimated by the principle which actuates his mind; by the uprightness and integrity of his intention; of which the great Judge of hearts only can be the adequate witness. And therefore, where appearances, in any man's conduct, are on the side of virtue, it betrays not only the greatest want of charity, but the height of impiety, to arrest the judgment of God, and sit in severe trial upon that Intention, of which the great God alone can determine. 'Tis true, there is a consistency in undissembled piety and religion, which will shew itself in the general tenour of a man's life and conduct. But, so frail is human nature, so many are the infirmities of the best of men, so mix'd are human characters; and, in consequence, of so doubtful a sort are many actions; that to a perverse and malignant temper (ever disposed to see things in the worst light) insinuations and reflections, with a seemly appearance *, may be thrown out, to asperse

* "Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike," &c. See the character of Atticus, in Pope's Epistles.

even the worthiest men. Against these there is no possibility of guarding ; and consequently they require no other notice, than to make us still more heedful to preserve the uniformity of our conduct. But, for the general reproaches which the vicious and the giddy cast upon you, my young friends ! as hypocrites and dissemblers, because you are conscientious observers of the great duties enjoined by your religion ; because you dare not profane the sabbath, or neglect your attendance at the holy table ; because you are not ashamed to read your bibles, nor dare to begin or end the day, without a solemn devotion of yourselves to the God of your life : For such general reproaches, cast upon you for these and the like reasons,—satisfied of the propriety, the indispensable necessity of these things, you will never be moved ; you will never be shaken from your steadfastness ; nor suffer a loud laugh, or a ridiculous jest to break off the regular and unwearied practice of duties, whose infallible issue is the approbation of conscience and of God.

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On the contrary, stimulated by sarcasms of this kind to a more diligent investigation of your principles and practice; you will labour, under God's grace, to amend whatever may but seem deficient in your behaviour; to improve in every good word and work; and with the most minute attention to preserve, as much as possible, a consistency of life and manners: That so the enemy may have nothing justly to revile; and that you, from these " trials of cruel mocking," may become more firm and rooted, like the oak, which strikes deeper, the more it is shaken by winds and storms,

(3.) But if neither the charges of Cowardice or Hypocrisy can affect you, alas, my young friends, how I tremble for the third! more powerful than each, and more to be dreaded than them both. The scoffers will hold you forth, with all the levity of ridiculous merriment, as a dull, morose, "Unsociable wretch;" fit only for the gloom of a Convent; or, as they will tell you, the mad society of your brethren of the Tabernacle! I feel the unpleasant effect which a charge like this will

have upon an ingenuous mind, disposed to receive, and to communicate satisfaction; fond of, perhaps, and desirous to share, that high and rational enjoyment, the intercommunity of pleasing and agreeable society. But, high and rational as is that enjoyment, agreeable as are the pleasures of that society, they may be bought too dear; and therefore, it much concerns you, to estimate in this case the gain and the loss. If you converse with the vicious, you must converse with them upon their own terms: Be assured, the notion of their complying with your's, is romantic and absurd. And if you retain your principles of piety and virtue, they will never rest themselves, nor let you rest; till, having plied the whole battery of Ridicule, they have level'd to the ground all that fair structure of innocence and truth, which tender parents and good education have erected with so much solicitude and care!

“What then,” (you will ask me) “is to be done in this case?—It is an observation not grounded on censure, but alas! on too general and palpable observation, that irre-

ligion and impiety prevail over goodness and virtue in the world; that if we live in it, we must converse with persons of the former character: How then shall we act? How shall a young man so direct his ways, as to preserve at once his virtue, and, what seems so essentially necessary to his comfort and well-being in life,—the love and esteem of mankind?"

There are two or three things indispensably requisite to these important ends. I would particularly recommend great Prudence, great Firmness, winning and condescending Mildness; and especially an attachment to the Company of the virtuous and the good. On this last head, I shall say the less, as having treated of it in a foregoing Sermon: I cannot however help just observing, that though the world, 'tis true, be bad and depraved enough, there are, thank God! numbers yet remaining, who have a just sense of themselves and their duty. Persons of this character, in a due consideration of their common enemies, and common interest, should associate together; And if you, my young hearers, sensible of

the excellence of a virtuous and religious course, would endeavour to strengthen each other, and to unite in friendships upon the footing of religion, you would find the joys of such friendships equalled by nothing but the utility of them. You would find that “as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” You would find such friendships the delight of your private hours, the support and solace of your public labours: You would find them (next to the religion you profess) the most substantial barrier against the Ridicule of fools. For most true is that declaration of David, that our lives and manners are ever tinged by those with whom we converse: “With the holy, thou shalt be holy; with a perfect man thou shalt be perfect: With the clean, thou shalt be clean, and with the froward, thou shalt learn frowardness *.”

However, to escape the contagion of the froward, much prudence and caution will be necessary. The religion of Christ is unquestionably a social religion; designed for

* Psal. xviii. 25, 26.

the world, and calling forth its professors to the exertion of all moral and relative duties : You must not therefore think that any thing can exempt you from the discharge of these ; or that religious duties are of such obligation, as to allow or countenance a neglect of them. God, in his great goodness, hath so constituted our nature and our duty, that religion and morality are interwoven together in such a manner, as to be perfectly indissoluble, and as such, we may be sure, perfectly consistent. Here, then, will be a great exercise for your Prudence to demonstrate that you thus consider them ; never suffering them so to interfere, as to clash with each other ; but, with the utmost circumspection, so honouring God, as to shew that you love and honour your fellow-creatures, and so loving your fellow-creatures, as to shew that the great principle of that affection is the knowledge, that we all have one God and father, one Saviour, and one hope,

But, while you walk with this Prudence and circumspection, you must take especial heed, that it deviate not into worldly com-

pliance and cunning. Wise to discern what is best, and willing to comply, far as conscience will permit; you must at the same time maintain the utmost Firmness, and the most unshaken attachment to those religious and virtuous principles, which you have imbibed, and made, upon good reason, the standard of your conduct, These are never to be given up, let what will befall you: They are the very anchor of your hope, and if once you let that anchor slip, your vessel will drive at the mercy of all the opposing winds and waves, and most probably ere long be ingulph'd in the quick-sands of irreligion and folly, or split on the rocks of vice.

Be firm, therefore, and stedfast to the truth: and to break (if I may so say) in some measure the severity of this unrelenting principle, shew in every other branch of your behaviour, an engaging Mildness and condescension. Christian humility, while it will never suffer you to grovel and be abject, will lead you to the truest politeness of behaviour; instructing you to become, far as may be, all things to all men; while Christian love, that

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other great principle of a pleasing conduct, will incite you to a zealous, active readiness in the service of your fellow-creatures; and both will tend to introduce such kind of manners, as, if there be any justice in men, will conciliate their favour and esteem;—certainly will conciliate the favour and esteem of the reflecting part of mankind, and make fools and knaves themselves (whatever they may say) reverence you in their inmost minds; and by approving Your conduct, condemn their own simple and pernicious ways. However, it matters little whether they shall approve or condemn: Thus secure of the applause of God, and of your own conscience, and happily persevering in so prudent, firm, and engaging a conduct, you will assuredly find the end to be the perfect peace of that conscience, and the high reward of that God, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.

Thus I have shewn you, Who they are that Ridicule, namely Fools, men of profane and vicious principles; and What it is they ridicule, namely, every thing serious

and sacred. I should now proceed to the third head : and consider the force of Ridicule itself : But this must be omitted to the next Sermon.

S E R M O N IX.

On Ridicule.

PART II.

PROVERBS xiv. 9.

Fools make a mock at Sin.

BECAUSE Ridicule is found to be so frequent amongst the vicious and profane, and because its influence is often most fatal to young and unexperienced minds; I have determined to examine the real state of the argument, and to shew “ what Force this boasted engine of the light and irreligious ought to have upon the mind.” To this end, I proposed First to consider the character of those who use it,—strongly expressed by the wise King in the text, under the appellation of Fools; that is, “ Men devoid of religious wisdom;” Fools in principle and practice; profane and vicious. These men (as one would expect) make religion, and its professors, the object of their Ridicule; which was the second thing intended to be shewn, and shewn

at large in the last discourse. These two considerations, of the Men, who make use of Ridicule, and of the important Object which they ridicule, one would think should be intirely sufficient to strengthen us against all the artillery of their light and absurd mockery; for surely, in every argument, and in every investigation, the character of the opponent, and the causes of his opposition, ought to have no inconsiderable weight.

III. However, we do not intend to rest the matter here; but will proceed, in the Third place, to take a nearer view of the topic in question; that we may discover “what is the real force, and genuine power of Ridicule; and consequently what is the weight which it ought to have, in any question of importance.”

Now, with respect to Ridicule, it has been urged, “That it is the alone test of truth: That whatever will not bear its poignant and searching trial, must of necessity give up all claim to our regard, and ought to be treated as false and contemptible.” But I

apprehend, this is so far from being the real state of the case, that it may be pronounced with the clearest certainty, that Ridicule never is, never can be the test of truth; that, on the contrary, it is commonly the strongest instrument of ignorance and error; and may indeed be applied on either side of the question, according to the dexterous management of him who shall think fit to use it.

(1.) RIDICULE, in the first place, “can never be the test of truth.” There are but three ways, by which we attain the knowledge of truth of any kind: The first, the testimony of our senses; the second, demonstration; the third, historical evidence. Now, it is palpable that Ridicule can in no single respect affect truth, acquired by any of these means: We can never be laughed out of what we have seen and heard ourselves; all the Ridicule in the world will be pointed in vain, to persuade us, that we did not see what our own eyes beheld, or did not hear what our own ears brought to our attention. With respect to Demonstration, the force of Ridicule is no less ineffica-

cious: Another, and a far different power of the human mind, here alone can give us satisfaction. It is by the slow and serious operations of reason only, that we compare, connect, deduce, and take all those steps which lead to a complete satisfaction of the judgment. Nay, so far is Ridicule from having any concern in the business of demonstration, that demonstration is utterly averse to the intrusion of this light and airy guest; serious and collected as it is, and depending upon the calm, partial, uninterrupted exertion of the reasoning faculties.

HISTORICAL truth also, utterly disclaims all connection with, all assistance from Ridicule. The methods which it pursues are of a very different kind; the arguments by which it establisheth its testimony, are plain facts, proved and confirmed by plain REASON, which, in this case, as in every other, is the only judge and arbiter of truth amongst men. It is evident that we can arrive at truth by no other methods than these; and I have employed, I fear, more words than are necessary, to shew, that Ridicule is perfectly insignifi-

cant, with respect to truth, attained either by sense, demonstration, or testimony. Indeed, as Ridicule is founded upon preconceived opinion, or prejudice, upon truth real or supposed; it is not possible, that it can either be the investigator, or the test of truth. For, it is made use of only by Men, who, having already formed their own notions, labour, in consequence of such notions, to throw contempt upon those of others, as disagreeing with, and different from their own. Ridicule, therefore, in this view, has not, cannot have the least concern with the discovery or the trial of truth.

It may be said, however, that its force is seen and tried in the case of moral conduct; or in regard to the truth and propriety of human actions: But this, again, is a position no less false than the former. Our moral conduct must be regulated by a very different rule; the truth and propriety of our actions must be tried by a very different test. Indeed, were there no rule of action more settled than the laughter of mankind, no test of propriety more determined than the

Ridicule of others, it would be extremely difficult to fix any standard for acting at all; since that would be very grave and commendable conduct at Japan, which would raise continual smiles in Turkey, or in France. The truth is, that Ridicule has in this case also no kind of concern. Common and indifferent actions, are to be regulated by the customs of the country in which we live; political ones by the laws of our society; moral and relative duties by the general and established rules of morality, where there is no revelation; and where there is, that revelation unquestionably supersedes every other rule, and is to be, with every believer of that revelation, the single and sole rule and test of his life and manners. If therefore Ridicule at any time presumes to lay her unequal level to those matters, we may disclaim the rule, as inadequate to the trial, and with justice appeal to the law, and to the testimony: And if our manners, squared by these, are found right and even, we may, with a just scorn, neglect every other pretence to examination.

(2.) Hence then we see, "That Ridicule can be no proper test of truth or propriety in manners, as we before saw, that it could be no test of the truth of fact." We may venture to assert further, "That it is the greatest instrument of ignorance and error." Consider from whence it springs, and see how unlikely it is to promote conviction in the mind. Its evident and undeniable source is contempt: Men never use Ridicule upon topicks, or against persons, which they value and esteem. Those who deal in it, having an utter contempt for that against which they employ it; and superciliously supposing their own knowledge more enlightened and enlarged, therefore attack their opponents with this weapon, which soothes their vanity, at the same time that it screens their ignorance. For certainly a light sally of ridiculous mirth, a pointed repartee, or a little wild, unexpensive wit, is much more easy than a well-connected chain of good argumentation, of right and serious reasoning. And hence it is, that the dealers in this small ware, are, for the most part, what Solomon characterises, **FOOLS**; men of little minds, and little

thought ; who, pursuing schemes far different from those which truth and reason recommend, have neither desire or leisure to cultivate and improve the powers of an enlarged understanding, and being thus of contracted minds, abound in the use of Ridicule: For it is an aphorism of established authority, that the most ignorant are always the most contemptuous.

And as the pursuits of men of this character are in every view prejudicial to the enlargement of the mind ; so does that Ridicule, in the use of which they are so free, well assort with their pursuits to prejudice such enlargement. For nothing more incapacitates the mind for right and serious inquiry, than the indulgence of it in vain and trifling levity ; than the accustoming it, in degradation of its highest prerogative Reason, to substitute in the stead of that Reason, frothy laughter, and inconsiderate jesting. Indeed, it is an observation no less true than common, that not to the improvement of the intellect only, but to all mental and moral

improvement, the strongest possible impediments are levity and inconsideration.

Thus Ridiculè is not only the instrument, but the source of Ignorance; and, as proceeding from Contempt, ill adapted indeed to convince and persuade men of the truth: For we shall be but little inclined to embrace their opinions, who shew a sovereign contempt for ours, and who give an edge to that contempt, by the raillery wherewith they treat us. Such a mode of proceeding, it must be acknowledged, is much more likely to inspire mutual hatred than mutual charity; and consequently, though it may tend to render us ridiculous in the sight of those with whom we converse, and sufficiently uneasy and dissatisfied; yet it can never tend to pour rational conviction into the reflecting mind.

Hence then, I think we may clearly see, what is the true power of RIDICULE: It is not, it never can be the test of truth of any kind: It may be, and frequently is, the source and instrument of error, ignorance,

and mutual hatred. On these accounts, it is certainly dangerous, obnoxious, and despicable, and therefore, by wise men, will be used very sparingly : For, while those above suggested are its evil effects, the only good use which can be made of it, is to expose known and allowed follies ; to laugh at affectations, which are too light to admit a serious reproof ; and now and then to cast a contempt upon those vices, which fashion hath in some measure placed beyond the reach * of sober and deliberate conviction.

However, certain it is, that Ridicule is much more subservient to the cause of falsehood, than of truth †. Truth, sufficiently illuminated by her own glory, wants not the feeble light of this glimmering taper : Falsehood, standing in need of all assistance to support her cause, is glad to call in the suc-

* See Brown's excellent Essays on the Characteristics, p. 106. and the Anecdotes, p. 55.

† It is very fairly and justly observed by *Quintilian*, that "Ridicule is of great force in oratory, because it draws off the mind from attending to the real nature of things :"
Quia animum ab intentione rerum frequenter avertit.—See Pope's Essay on Criticism.

cour of every ally ; and therefore readily enlists Ridicule, with her light and irregular troops, to scour the enemy, and, like the Parthians, to throw their flying arrows at random amongst them. Hence it is, that there hath been scarce any truth so sacred, or any man so good, as to escape the shafts of Ridicule. Even that immortal Socrates, whom some modern friends of Ridicule are so desirous to exalt, could not avoid its envenomed malice ; but levelled and traduced by the impure wit of a licentious scoffer, he gave a strong proof indeed what a test of truth this same Ridicule is, when he drank the cup of poison in consequence of its power *.

A much greater than Socrates, proved by every mode of affliction, did not escape the contemptuous trial of Ridicule. Clothed in mock purple, blindfolded, spit upon, He heard from the contemptuous scoffers, "Prophesy, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" Nay, and in a moment, when one would have thought the keenest malice must

* See the Anecdotes, p. 54.

have been satiated, and the proudest contempt softened into pity; in that dreadful moment, when He, who had lived dispensing blessings, hung tormented on the cross; even then, insulting Ridicule must have its triumph: "They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads; while the chief-priests, with the scribes and elders, mocking him said, He saved others, himself he cannot save!"—Is not this a recommendation of Ridicule to your practice? Is not this an high proof of its power and excellence?—Were there no other argument to urge against it, it would surely be sufficient to make every man cautious in the use of it, when he reflects, that its parent is contempt; and that its genuine offspring is hatred, cruelty, and murder. For those who accustom themselves to that Ridicule, which proceeds from a contempt of others, will unquestionably so gradually feed the selfish, and destroy the social affections, as to make the mind callous to the latter, while the former predominate, to the utter subversion of all that is gentle and generous in the soul.

It would be easy to go on, and shew, by a large detail, how commonly this instrument of vice and irreligion hath been employed to promote their cause. The followers of Christ, ordained in all things to be like their master, have felt the severity of it; they have had trials of cruel mockings, no less than of scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment. "Many a brave martyr has offered up his prayers to heaven, that he might be released by death from the contempt of his enemies; and, after being baited in the bear-skin, found a refuge in the faggot, or the pitch-barrel." The trial indeed, hath so far turned out for the advantage of Christianity, that it still retains its credit, and consequently the friends of Ridicule, if they are steady to their own principles, must acknowledge it's truth and divine authority: At least it must be allowed fair, thus to turn their own arguments upon them. We lay however no stress upon this reasoning; assured that Christianity hath far better, and very different support.

But there are good reasons, why some professed unbelievers may choose to try our religion in this way: For while there is nothing more

difficult, than to pursue with impartial unremitting attention, the investigation of truth, and the deductions of deep and thoughtful reason; there is nothing more easy than by light Jest, and ridiculous Turns to discountenance that investigation; to render the mind averse to it, and to induce a trifling and inconsiderate disposition. It is on these accounts that the enemies of revelation choose to proceed in this way,—a kind of flying hussars in the field of truth,—rather than to determine concerning that truth by fair reasoning and just argument. These require knowledge and attention; for the former, nothing is necessary but a small share of wit, with a large proportion of ignorance and presumption: Commodities, in which HE * is found to deal very largely, who has with an impiety unparalleled in any times, dared like the soldiers, the priests and scribes amongst the Jews, to insult with his mad mockery the crucified Saviour, and almost every article of his holy faith; though he himself well knows, that all those articles which he so insultingly reviles, have been again and again irrefragably defended and supported; and that, how-

* See Voltaire's 4th Vol. of Miscellanies.

ever with their blessed master they may be scouted and scorned, they can never be confuted or disproved *!

But, enough of scoffers like these; unworthy to be mentioned on any other account, but as they rise up in proof of the truth of that important argument which we would assert, and of the wise man's observation in the text, that "Fools make a mock at Sin."

FROM all that has been said, you will estimate, my young friends, what weight this mockery ought to have with you; and,

* It is well observed by a fine writer, "That there can be no true wit, which has not reason for the foundation of it: That ridiculing what is in itself good, useful and venerable, fixes a certain reproach upon him who attempts it, either upon his understanding or his morals: That jesting with things of the highest consequence is folly and madness: That 'tis an easy matter by misrepresenting to make any thing appear ridiculous: And consequently, that this talent is as far from being a demonstration, that the person who possesses it is a wit, as it is from being an evidence of his good-breeding, that in violation of all the rules of decency he banters and treats with scurrility the established religion of his country, and that for which all around him have a high value." Foster's Sermons, Vol. I. p. 155.

whenever it is levelled against you, will not fail to consider the characters of the persons who use it; against what objects, and for what ends they use it; and what is the real force and genuine power, of the Ridicule which they use.

(1.) For the first; there surely can be no doubt, that the approbation of the virtuous and the good, will be a sufficient counter-balance to the Scorn and Ridicule of the vicious and profane. We have before shewn, how little attention or concern men of such a stamp deserve from you: But, insignificant and useless (to say no more) as their notice may be; valuable, important, and delightful is the friendship of the good: And you will think the scoffs and contempt of those who run every length of riot, amply repaid by the delights of that friendship, no less than by the many and striking advantages which you will derive by escaping the fatal consequence of that riot.

(2.) For the second; convinced that religion and virtue are of indispensable necessity

to the present and future happiness of man; you will find them, under this just prepossession, no way lessened in your esteem by the scoffs of those who are strangers to them both. Convinced that such scoffs, unsupported by reason, can never make any alteration in the nature of these things, you will still remain equally attached to them, and to truth. Men may be bold, may be absurd, may be wicked enough, profanely to mock the great God himself, and all his divine and benevolent dispensations; they may ridicule that Virtue, which all ages and people have agreed to hold venerable; the best men, and the best things may be (as they have been) the objects of their contemptuous scorning. But who sees not that God and virtue are by no means changed, or in any respect depreciated by such a treatment? If they once were, they still continue, deserving your utmost veneration. And when you compare them, but for a moment compare the objects of your pursuit, and of the reviler's scorn, with those objects and those pursuits which they would recommend,—how must you be settled,—how firmly must you be

rooted in the happy choice you have made! For, how mighty the difference,—not only with respect to future life, but to our present well-being, between a rational and steady adherence to piety, sobriety, justice and benevolence; and a wild, lawless neglect of duty to God, and a desperate plunge into the practice of vice! which destroys all self-government, all internal peace; which shatters the constitution, ruins the circumstances, and makes the man not more the contempt of himself, than of all who know him.

Steadfast, therefore, in your attachment to religion and virtue, you will want (upon a comparison like this) no motives to persuade you of the wisdom of your own choice, and of the daring folly of such men as are hardy and simple enough, to treat with Ridicule those things which confessedly are, and have always been thought by the wise and rational, the best, the greatest; most meriting our constant and highest attention, as most infallibly productive of our truest Good.

Nor will vice lose any of its horror in your view, or seem a whit the less hateful and destructive, when those who dare to ridicule their maker, religion, virtue and goodness, at the same time, treat with levity and unconcern those foul crimes and pernicious practices, to whose deformity they have unhappily familiarized themselves. It is one of the subtlest delusions of vice to cheat its votaries by false and palliating names; a custom, alas! but too prevalent. Names, however, you will at all times remember, can never alter the nature of things; Murder will still be murder; adultery will still be adultery; drunkenness will still be drunkenness, call them by what titles you may. And though honour and duels, gallantry and pleasure, good-fellowship and sociableness, may be substituted in the stead of juster appellations, truth and conscience subscribe not to this language; and God, the great judge of all, will not admit it in his last great court of awful inquisition.

Suffer not yourselves, therefore, my young friends, to be deluded and abused by the specious and softening language of the vicious:

But remember, that vice, palliated by what softening appellations it may, remains for ever unaltered, and the same; ever alike odious to God; ever alike opposite to his holy laws; ever alike contrary to the interests and the happiness of man.

(3.) All the Power of the best-directed Ridicule upon earth, is feeble and inefficacious to divert a mind, thus clearly satisfied of the eternal difference between virtue and vice, from that steady course which truth and religion recommend and approve; and a consciousness of the real Force of Ridicule, (the third thing spoken of) its inadequacy to the discovery or the proof of truth, will render its attacks less formidable; while, with regard to moral conduct, under a right knowledge of its equal inadequacy, when applied thereto, you will boldly condemn its important assaults, and appeal with cheerfulness to that sole test of moral behaviour, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Tell the scorers, my young friends, with undaunted fortitude, that you will thankfully acknowledge the propriety of their censure, and the justice of

their mockery, if they can point out the inconsistency of your actions with the laws of your great Master : But with equal fortitude tell them, that while your actions are, thro' God's grace, consistent with those laws, you can well bear to have your life accounted madness by men of their character ; as perfectly assured, that your end shall not be without honour *.

Let me however caution you, in this best and noblest of all combats, to avoid with the utmost care all singularity in conduct and behaviour, which may give a plausible pretence for Ridicule, and too justly expose you to the mockery of illiberal scorers. For though it is most true, that religion, virtue, and goodness, are things in themselves so really excellent, and, considered in the abstract, so universally respectable, that it is utterly impossible for Ridicule to fix upon them ; yet, as displayed in the human conduct and character (which are generally mixed and imperfect) they often contract a kind of peculiarity, which gives their ene-

* Ecclesiasticus, v. 4.

mies a fair occasion, as they think, to throw out their unseemly scoffs. And unhappily, superstitious and enthusiastick men, hurried on by blind and irrational zeal, have by their absurd, and in many respects pernicious behaviour, given but too much ground for the most pointed Ridicule.

Let it therefore be remembered, that if Ridicule in these respects hath any power, it is certainly, not over religion and virtue ; but over the weaknesses and follies, the singularity and affectation of those men, who have not had sufficient discernment to separate their own absurdities from the cause they meant to promote ; and upon which, in consequence, those absurdities have brought a reproach.

Be it your care then, by a close adherence to that Prudence, which was heretofore recommended, to avoid, in your religious conduct more especially, all such absurdities as may afford just matter of mockery to those, who are always no less ready than quick to remark it. Singularity of every kind is

blameable ; and affectation is always the mark of a mean and undiscerning mind : They have no concern with the cause of truth and virtue ; which every man may well pursue, in a sober, prudent, and serious manner, without affectation, without singularity, except vice indeed be so generally in fashion, as to render singularity in virtue almost unavoidable.

There is however one method, by which you may point the shafts of Ridicule more keenly, than by singularity or affectation ; I mean, by inconsistency and impropriety of conduct. This would be giving the adversary just cause indeed of triumphant mockery over you : and therefore, let me conjure, let me earnestly intreat you, my young friends, —happily engaged on the side of piety and goodness,—to keep an especial watch over your conduct of every kind, that you may preserve the uniformity and regularity of it, and thus defy the sons of scorn to fix a real brand of contempt upon you. Truth it is, human nature is frail, and we are all liable to many temptations and many errors ; but be not you discouraged, amidst this imperfection

of your state and nature, if, sincere and upright in your intentions, you preserve as carefully as you can the even and blameless tenour of your way. Though you cannot hope to be free from those many infirmities "to which flesh is heir;" yet, maintaining a general habit of piety, your God will approve, his divine Spirit will assist your well-meant endeavours, and your Saviour will perfect your redemption. And while no character, will, or ought more justly to meet with the contempt both of God and of man, than that of those, who, under large pretences to religion and virtue, are found notoriously deficient in both; while Ridicule (if it ever can be applied with propriety) can never be applied with greater propriety than on inconsistent and hypocritical professors like these; yet that Ridicule, be assured, will never reach, can never affect you. For, safe from its shafts, and secure from all its power, shall that man pass, who, deeply grounded in the love of God, holds up before his breast the adamant shield of living faith; thus repelling all the fiery darts of the enemy; and enlightened on his way by the steady and unclouded glory of the

Sun of righteousness, perseveres with unshaken courage and fortitude in that sure and unerring path to life, which HE hath pointed out; who, made perfect through sufferings of every kind, goeth before us,—the great captain of our salvation,—bearing on his crimson banner, this animating Inscription, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

ANECDOTES on the foregoing subject of
R I D I C U L E.

(I.) A young gentleman of moderate understanding, but of great vivacity, by dipping into many authors of the modish and free-thinking turn, had acquired a little smattering of knowledge, just enough to make an atheist or a freethinker, but not a philosopher or a man of sense. With these accomplishments, he went into the country to visit his father, who was a plain, rough, honest man, and wise, though not learned. The son, who took all opportunities to shew his learning, began to establish a new religion in the family, and to enlarge the narrowness of their country notions; in which he succeeded

so well, that he seduced the butler by his table-talk, and staggered his eldest sister. The old gentleman began to be alarmed at the schisms that arose among his children, but did not yet believe his son's doctrine to be so pernicious as it really was; till one day talking of his setting dog, the son said He did not question but Carlo was as immortal as any one of the family; and in the heat of the argument told his father, that for his part, he expected to die like a dog. Upon which the old man, starting up in a passion, cried out, "Then, Sirrah, you shall live like one!" and taking his cane in his hand, cudgelled him out of his system, and brought him to more serious reflections and better studies. "I do not (continues Sir Richard Steele, from whom this is taken) mention the cudgelling part of the story with a design to engage the secular arm in matters of this nature: But certainly if it ever exerts itself in affairs of opinion and speculation, it ought to do it on such shallow and despicable pretenders to knowledge, who endeavour to give a man dark and uncomfortable prospects of his being, and to destroy those principles which are the sup-

port, happiness and glory of all public societies, as well as of private persons." See Tatler, N^o. 108.

(2.) "If the talent of Ridicule, says Mr. Addison, were employed to laugh men out of vice and folly, it might be of some use in the world; but instead of this, we find that it is generally made use of to laugh men out of virtue and good sense, by attacking every thing that is serious and solemn, decent and praise-worthy in human life." We have a remarkable example in the case of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon; concerning whom (among the other measures taken to prejudice and ruin him with King Charles the II^d) we are told, that mockery and Ridicule were two of the most notable weapons employed by his adversaries,—and almost all his adversaries were the vicious and the profane. The Duke of Buckingham in particular, and Eleanor Gwynn the King's mistress, were chief among these; the latter being often allowed to entertain the King and some of his courtiers, with mocking at the age and infirmities of the good Lord Chancellor, and

attempting to imitate his lameness of gait, and gravity of aspect; while the former upon every occasion pleased himself and the company, in acting all the persons who spoke even at the council board, in their looks and motions;—a piece of mimicry in which he had an especial faculty; and in his exercise of which the Chancellor had a full part. Thus, in the height of mirth, if the King said, “He would go such a journey, or do such a trivial thing to-morrow;” a wager would be laid with him that he would not do it; and when the King asked why, it was answered, “That the Chancellor would not let him;” and another would protest “That he thought there was no ground for that imputation; however he could not deny that it was generally believed abroad, that his Majesty was entirely and implicitly governed by the Chancellor:”. And when by these means they had often put the King in a passion, it was instantly reported with great joy in other companies. By such petty, low, and most illiberal arts was a great and good man insulted, and at length degraded from all his comforts, his honours, and his good name.

(3.) Nor was this all: The merry Monarch himself suffered most essentially by the like shafts of Ridicule and Buffoonery; had it not been for which, there seems no room to doubt that in many instances he had proved a much better King and a more happy man. This is particularly noted by the noble Lord abovementioned, who one day told the King, "That it was observed abroad to be a faculty very much improved of late in his court, to laugh at those arguments which they could not answer:" And though, says he, the King did not then, nor a good while after, appear to dislike the liberty I presumed to take with him; yet I found every day that some arguments grew less acceptable to him, and that the constant conversation he held with men of great profaneness, whose wit consisted in abusing scripture, and in repeating and acting what preachers said in their sermons, and turning it into Ridicule (a science in which the Duke of Buckingham excelled) did much lessen the natural esteem and reverence he had for the clergy; and inclined him to consider them as a rank of men, who compounded a

religion for their own advantage, and to serve their own turns; nor was all that I could say to him of weight enough to make any impression to the contrary*.

(4.) Dr. Delaney, in the second volume of his life of David, p. 61. judiciously observes, that the dignity of the most excellent things and persons greatly suffers by being once seen in a ludicrous light, that is, in their most opposite extreme; because ideas are then associated in the minds of the spectators, which perhaps can never afterwards be wholly parted. I am astonished, therefore, (says he) how any man of humanity—to throw reason and virtue out of the question,—could make that Ridicule a test of true excellence, which murdered the best man of the Heathen world; which first debased the dignity of Socrates in the eyes of the vulgar, and then brought him to the bar and to the hemlock! For, if Aristophanes had not been suffered to ape his person and dress, and to ridicule him in “The Clouds,” Anytus and

* See “Continuation of Lord Clarendon’s life,” written by himself, Vol. ii. p. 467. and Vol. iii. p. 682.

Melitus would never have dared to have called him to the bar as a malefactor.

(5.) The Earl of C——d being at Brussels, was waited on by the celebrated M. Voltaire, who politely invited him to sup with him and Madame C——. His Lordship accepted the invitation; the conversation happening to turn upon the affairs of England, “I think, my Lord, said Madame C——, that the parliament of England consists of five or six hundred of the best informed and most sensible men in the kingdom?”—“True, Madam; they are generally supposed to be so.” “What then, my Lord, can be the reason that they tolerate so great an absurdity as the Christian Religion?”—“I suppose, Madam, (replied his Lordship) it is because they have not been able to substitute any thing better in its stead: When that is the case, I don’t doubt but in their wisdom they will readily accept it.” Surely so well-turned a piece of Raillery was more forcible than a thousand arguments; and in cases like these, it is, that the true use of Ridicule is seen.

(6.) An ancient author relates that a company of vain and profligate persons having been drinking and inflaming their blood in a tavern at Boston in New England, upon seeing the reverend Mr. Cotton, a pious and amiable minister, coming along the street, one of them told his companions, "I'll go, and put a trick upon the old Cotton." Accordingly he approached him, and crossing his way, whispered in his ear, "Cotton, thou art an old fool."—"True, replied Mr. Cotton, I confess I am so;—the Lord make both me and thee wiser than we are; even wise to salvation!" Struck with his answer, the man related it to his associates, and notwithstanding their then situation, it failed not to cast a great damp upon their spirits, in the midst of their frolicks.

(7.) The retirement and usual pensiveness of Sir Francis Walsingham, prime Minister of Queen Elizabeth, being looked upon by his friends at court as a fit of melancholy, some of them came to him, on purpose to amuse and divert him from it. Sir Francis however soon repressed their jocularities, by

telling them, “ Ah my friends ! while we laugh, all things are serious round about us. God is serious, who exerciseth such patience towards us ; Christ is serious, who shed his blood for us ; the Holy Ghost is serious, who striveth against the obstinacy of our hearts : The sacred Scriptures bring to our ears the most serious and important things in the world ; the Holy Sacraments represent to us the most serious and awful matters : The whole Creation is serious in serving God and us ; All that are in heaven and hell are serious. How then can Man, that hath one foot in the grave, jest and laugh ?”—What an antidote to scoffing and mockery are obvious reflections like these !

(8.) If ever a vein of Ridicule be useful in conversation, as sometimes is the case, it seems peculiarly so, where just and solid argument can have no effect ; for, as a late very elegant writer observes, “ When a man is steeled and hardened against conviction, we may warrantably, like Hannibal after other expedients have been tried in vain, cut through the rock with vinegar.” The following is

a memorable instance. Several Jesuits being one day in company with the celebrated Monsieur Boileau, roundly asserted, according to the principles of that society, that Attrition for sin only was necessary, and that we were not obliged to love God: Withal insisting, that those who advanced the contrary were in an error, and imposed an insupportable yoke upon Christians, whom God had rendered free by a new law. It was to no purpose to unravel their fallacies; the dispute began to grow warm: When Mr. Boileau, who had hitherto kept a profound silence, starting up cried; “ Oh how prettily will it sound in the final day of judgment, when our Lord shall say to his elect, Come you, ye well beloved of my father; for ye have never loved me in your life, but have always forbidden that I should be loved, and constantly and bravely opposed those Hereticks, who were for obliging Christians to love me.—And You, on the contrary, Go ye to the devil and his angels; you, the accursed of my father: For ye have loved me with your whole heart, and have solicited and importuned the whole world beside to love

me." This raillery struck his opponents dumb, and more effectually enforced the necessity of divine love, than all the solid and cogent arguments before urged had been able to do.

—————Ridiculum acri

Fortius ac melius magnas plerumque secat Res.

(9.) The lines in the character of Atticus, mentioned in p. 15. present us with a proper occasion to justify Mr. Addison from the application which many have made of them to him; and which indeed seems to have been invidiously intended by the author himself. Nothing that may tend to remove a single suspicion from a character so amiable as that of the writer of the Spectators, can fail of a welcome reception with the candid public; and so far is the abovementioned artful description of Atticus, from being in the least applicable to Mr. Addison, that we have the undoubted authority of a noble Lord, one of his intimate friends, for asserting, That often as he has been in Mr. Addison's company, yet, in the whole course of his Lordship's acquaintance with him, he never remembers

to have heard him throw out an oblique intimation, that had the appearance of ill-nature; nor make a single remark upon any man, but what was perfectly worthy the gentleman and man of honour, and consistent with a candid, humane, and ingenuous mind.—We cannot give a better demonstration of this truth, than by referring the reader to the Spectator, No. 256. and particularly to No. 445. which that celebrated writer thus concludes; “ I am not so vain as to think that the general approbation of these papers is so much due to the performance, as to the design. There is and ever will be justice enough in the world, to afford patronage and protection for those, who endeavour to advance truth and virtue, without regard to the passions and prejudices of any particular cause or faction. If I have any other merit in me, it is that I have new-pointed all the batteries of Ridicule: They have been generally planted against persons who have appeared serious rather than absurd; or at best, have aimed rather at what is unfashionable than what is vicious. For my own part, I have endeavoured to make nothing ridiculous, that is not

in some measure criminal: I have set up the immoral man as the object of derision. In short, if I have not formed a new weapon against vice and irreligion, I have at least shewn how that weapon may be put to a right use, which has so often fought the battles of impiety and profaneness."

(10.) " Indeed, Neander, said Eusebius to his young friend, a Christian behaviour among gentlemen is so unusual, that you must venture to be out of fashion; you must stand the shock of raillery, and perchance the stroke of a lampoon: But these weapons stick only in the skin, and, though they are pushed on with all the violence of malice and profaneness, are not able to draw blood, or to touch the reputation. I have often been astonished at some gentlemen, who practised virtue at home, and vice in company; who betray their conscience,—to avoid a blush! This, said I, is to fall into the wretched blindness of some savage Indians, who adore the devil, that he may do them no harm. If Libertines glory in evil, why should You be ashamed at good? That carries along with it

its own condemnation, and This its justification. Surely shame sits more naturally on guilt, than on innocence!—But, Neander, could we dive into the wicked man's heart, could we pierce into his soul, we should there read the most visible traces of shame and confusion, every moment he casts an eye on his own vices, and the virtues of his happier neighbour. For, let me tell you, piety has an amiable aspect: It charms its very persecutors; and even those who stigmatize it in practice, admire its beauty. So that though sometimes they let fly a Raillery, or shoot a Jest, these petty arrows flit at random, and never come near your honour.—Nay, take it for a general rule, that those Libertines who sneer at a Christian demeanor have themselves a secret esteem for it. But, let debauchees burlesque your piety, must You therefore abandon it? Will you abjure Christianity, because such men sport with religion; or commence Atheist, to humour the fool, who saith “There is no God?”—Is it honourable, in spite of Ridicule, to acknowledge a God, and yet a disgrace to serve Him? Is it a credit to be a Christian, and a shame to be a good

and a sincere one? No, certainly. Let us then put things together, and act accordingly. Let us call in reason to govern fancy. We have been seeing indeed how hard it is for a young man to withstand

———“ The world’s dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm Philosopher can scorn :”

But, let us only consider, who are those men that awe us?—Perhaps a set of beings, who have more wealth than wisdom, and more quality than conscience; cowards in the face of truth, yet bravoës against God: Men, who live ill, and judge worse; who are pitied by some, and scorned by others; and whose very panegyricks are satires. Praise out of such mouths is scandal, and their blame is true glory. O Neander! suffer not yourself to be laughed out of heaven, nor rallied into hell. If you cannot now bear the loud laughter or taunting smiles of a Man; how will you one day endure the frowns of an angry Deity?—If the lash of a petulant tongue be so sensible, can you suppose that the pains of Almighty vengeance will be more tolerable?—Virtue in a dungeon is preferable

to sin on the throne; and innocence in the pillory more honourable than guilt on the bench: For a day is coming and we know not how soon, when “The wise only shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of Fools.”

S E R M O N X.

P A R T I.

On Pleasure.

ECCLESIASTES xi. 9.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes:—But, know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

TH E R E never was a man, my young friends, who enjoyed more ample power to gratify his passions, and indulge himself in every earthly pleasure, than Solomon: And there seems never to have existed a man, who had either a greater relish for, or drank larger draughts from pleasure's intoxicating cup. You must acknowledge therefore, that his testimony is decisive on this head; and in the Book of Ecclesiastes he gives us that testimony. After having informed us, that “whatsoever his eyes desired he kept not from them; that he withheld not his heart from

any joy ;” he adds, as the result and sad close of the final account, that “ all was vanity and vexation of spirit !” The gratification afforded no solid and substantial joy ; and the consequences were bitter and distressful to the reflecting mind.

In this view, with a nervous and affecting sarcasm, he applies to Youth, eager in the pursuit of pleasure, as he himself once was : “ Rejoice, says he, O young man, if you think proper to give up the pursuits of wisdom ; rejoice in your youth ; and let your heart cheer you, in this thoughtless giddy period of life, with the things wherein it delighteth : Walk in the ways of your corrupt heart, and in the sight of your deceitful eyes : Listen to your passions, and follow the bent of your depraved imagination : BUT, know—consider well the price that you must pay for these transitory gratifications ; know, as an eternal truth, that for all these things, God will bring you into judgment ! Your soul and body will feel, even in this life, the beginnings of that fearful account, which remains inevitably to be made ; and which must be made before

that just and awful judge, who will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil *."

Yes, my young friends, a fearful account remains to be made in this world, as well as in the next, for the unrestrained pursuit of earthly pleasures and sensual gratifications: And, willing to warn you from every peril which may threaten you in your course through life, I would now lead you to a serious review of that PLEASURE, which is no less the wish, than the eager pursuit of your age;—too much, alas! the eager pursuit of all mankind. Certain, however, it is, that nothing can be more contrary to the end of our existence, nothing more unworthy the nature of man, than to live for pleasure only; nor can a more mean, and at the same time a more wicked character be drawn, than that of a "lover of pleasure more than a lover of God!"

Yet, mistake me not, as if I meant so to decry Pleasure, as to wish to withhold every

* See Desvoeux's Comment on the Book of Ecclesiastes.

species and appearance of it, either from our nature in general, or from your sprightly age in particular : Mistake me not, as if with stoical apathy, or monkish austerity, I would deny to youth the natural and pleasing indulgences of that pleasing period of their life. So far from it, my wish, and my intention is, not only to secure true pleasures to your age, but to improve and heighten those pleasures. Clearly satisfied, that the great author of our being, hath, for the wisest and best ends, interwoven, as it were, in the very texture of our nature, a desire after pleasure ; I am no less clearly satisfied, that he hath amply provided for the perfect completion of that desire. But, strong as it is in itself, and attractive as are the objects of it, there is the utmost danger, lest it carry us beyond the bounds, or fix upon other objects, than those ordained by God and by nature to gratify it. It is therefore of the utmost importance, if we would reap all the comforts and high satisfactions, which the benevolent author of our being hath attached to true Pleasure, that we carefully consider its Nature and its Boundaries ; that we wisely inform ourselves of the nature

and ill effects of false Pleasure, and determine by God's grace, invariably to pursue the former; while we fly from the latter, as that, which, however sweet in the taste, will be found bitter and painful in the stomach; which, however it may exhilarate for a passing moment, will infallibly bring us into judgment!

And if, in the handling of this copious topick, I shall be enabled, my young friends, to present you with any arguments sufficient to guard you against the allurements of that deceitful and pernicious syren "False Pleasure;" if I shall be enabled to preserve your youthful feet in the blessed paths of that virtue and religion, which infallibly lead to true Pleasure; if, by any thing here urged, your present existence shall be made more comfortable, and your future happiness, through Christ, secured; what infinite cause of mutual satisfaction shall we receive, and how much will it behove us to give glory together to the God of heaven who hath so blessed your attention, and my labours! And I persuade myself, that these good effects will follow; and that I shall not only have your

attention now, but hereafter your diligent compliance with what shall be urged ; because my heart witnesses to me, that the most sincere and affectionate zeal for your welfare dictates what I utter ; because I address you, not with the rigor of authority, but with the tender love, even of parental admonition ; because, God is my witness, one of the greatest satisfactions I could enjoy on this side heaven, would be to see You (my dear young friends) rise up to bless God in your generation ; scorning all the base and pernicious allurements of vice ; enjoying all the just and honourable Pleasures whereof your nature is capable.

To this purpose, then, let us in the first place consider “ The nature, and the boundaries of true Pleasure.” With regard to the former, we may well define it to be “ That which is agreeable to the whole of our being, and inconsistent with none of our moral or religious obligations :” For, in our estimate of virtue and vice, of pleasure and pain, we must always, to avoid any deception, take in the whole of what we are : the

great author of our being having in so wise and wonderful a manner, united the distinct parts of our nature, having so combined our soul and body, that not only their effects each upon the other, but their offices and operations are reciprocal, and in the closest manner connected. Hence, while some Pleasures are peculiar to the animal nature, and in a high degree satisfactory to that nature; yet, when indulged beyond the proper bounds, the soul instantly reverts, and claims her portion, or denies her tribute. We must therefore, in our Pleasure, consult our whole nature; and remember, that we are not animals only, but rationals also; and not only rationals, but social; and not only social, but immortal; ordained to fill up certain offices in this life, and for the life to come accountable to a Being, who for all these things will bring us into judgment.

That then, alone, is true Pleasure, which will bear to be estimated according to this true state of our nature; and for the Boundaries of Pleasure in the general, we may further observe, “ That no Pleasure can be true, or

perſued with propriety and wiſdom, which makes too large inroads on our time, our fortune, our health, our character, or our duty."

Of all the deposits in the hands of men, Time is certainly one of the moſt precious; and upon the wiſe and right improvement of it, much of your happineſs, and much of your ſucceſs too, in this life, depend. The ſeaſon of youth is the great ſeaſon for improvement of every kind; and if you loſe its important moments, you loſe not only the moments themſelves, but abſolutely preclude yourſelves from thoſe advantages, which you will never obtain in any other period. This, therefore, is a ſtrong argument to convince you of the criminality of all pleaſure, which makes you unthrifty and waſteful prodigals of that Time, which, once loſt, is redeemable no more; which, once loſt, the opportunity of improving in knowledge and virtue with-in that period, is alſo loſt, and probably loſt for ever! But, let it be obſerved, that this, though a reaſon peculiarly applicable to youth, is by no means the only one that renders the Pleaſure criminal, which waſtes our time.

Consider only the great end for which time is given us ; consider the shortness of that time, at the best, and the fearful uncertainty of its continuance : Consider the many great and important duties, which man hath to perform in this short and uncertain period ; Consider the inestimable prize, for which he is to improve this time, and the glorious eternity, which is to reward that improvement ; and can you have a more convincing, a more affecting view, of the unworthiness, of the baseness, of the criminality of that Pleasure, which dissipates, in its wretched and unthinking round, the moments given us for purposes so important.

Pleasure, again, becomes excessive and criminal, when it injures our Fortune. You (my young friends) are either born to an inheritance, or ordained to procure your subsistence by your own industry : In the former case, your inheritance is as much a talent intrusted to you by God, as any other endowment of mind or body ; and, if you would approve yourself to Him, you are under the highest obligations so to employ

your fortune, as that it may stand the scrutiny, when the inquisition concerning it shall be brought into judgment. To this end, after the just and rational demands of your own state and exigence are answered; after your family and dependents have their equitable supplies from you, you have no more right to squander away in profusion what remains, than you would have to refuse to your distressed fellow-creatures who wanted them, eyes, or arms, or feet, if you had a number of them in your power to dispose of. Whenever therefore the pursuit of Pleasure leads you to a dissipation of your substance, that Pleasure is highly criminal, as it leads you to the abuse of a talent intrusted with you by God, and to the extreme injury of those, whom that God hath made your brethren; and hath given their wants and distresses a draft and demand, as it were, on your superfluities.

I dwell not further on the criminality of that Pleasure which injures your inheritance, as involving your mind in distress, as harming your just creditors, as injuring, in a peculiar

manner, your posterity, and those who have a right to expect from you that patrimony, which you received from your progenitors. Let me only observe, that the arguments hold with double force, with respect to those of you (my young friends) who are "ordained by God, to procure subsistence by your own industry." Whatever you may think of it, you will not perhaps find this lot so unhappy as it may seem. A comfortable inheritance derived from parents, when properly improved, is unquestionably a singular blessing; but it becomes as great a curse, when, as is too often the case, it leads to the dissipations of false Pleasure, and stops the springs of that Industry, which is the honour, and the happiness of man; a virtue no less adapted to the perfection of his moral nature, than to the improvement of his temporal estate. And, take it from me (my young friends) as a certain truth, that if, blessed with this patrimony of industry, you relax not from its rules, but vigorously and honestly pursue the duties of your station; you will find, not only your fortune improved, but your mind ever in a state of self-possession, which they know

nothing of, who are the wretched slaves of enervating, ruinous idleness. But, in proportion as this industry is necessary to the gain and the improvement of fortune, that Pleasure must be criminal in itself, and destructive to you, which, while it wastes the substance springing from your industry, necessarily unnerves that industry itself, and thus doubly destroys you. For, let it at all times be remembered, that the Pleasure, which injures the fortune, is a many-headed monster, and cannot do the former without devouring also the time and the industry ordained to procure or to preserve that fortune.

Should it go further, and prejudice the Health also, you have another criterion that it is false and sinful : For, as the enjoyment of health is one of the greatest temporal blessings, one which gives zest and relish to all the rest ; so is a due attention to the preservation of it, one of the prime laws of nature ; and consequently, whatever tends to destroy it, is not only criminal in itself, but must of necessity defeat the end at which it aims.

For, it is a maxim, which requires no proof,
“ That without health there can be no substantial Pleasure.”

How many positive evils, how many miseries and disquietudes accompany the loss of health, and surround the man whose constitution hath been broken by indulgences in his youth, it would take up too much time even to enumerate. I dwell not therefore on these; but remark further, that those Pleasures, which fix a brand upon the Character, are ever to be shunned, as deceitful and destructive. Character, my young friends, is a jewel of such inestimable price, that it can never be rated too high, or preserved too cautiously: It is a sort of current coin, which enables a man to pass through life easily and happily; and it is a possession which stamps a value upon all you are and have beside; inso-much that confidence with men, and honour from them, are its natural and almost necessary result. Nor is there any sphere or station of life, however exalted, or however depressed, which renders character a matter of indifference, or can sink its worth. Easily

then may you conceive, how ruinous that Pleasure must be, which mars the beauty of your fair reputation in youth, and renders either equivocal or despicable that Character, which is, or ought to be your best passport through the journey of life.

Once more; that Pleasure must be in a high degree criminal, which interferes with your Duty, civil or religious; which either prevents you from discharging the proper offices of your station in life; which makes you a bad son, a bad brother, a bad friend, a bad neighbour, a bad servant, or a bad subject; which renders your example pernicious and prejudicial to society; or, which incapacitates you for the right exercise of those high duties to your God, which are no less indispensable in their obligation, than they are fraught with comfort in the performance.

These are points so universally allowed, and so self-evident, that they can require no proof; however, the instances I propose to give in the following discourses, of those False Pleasures which men so greedily pursue, will

abundantly evince that they are no less injurious to time, to fortune, to health, to reputation, than they are in every respect contradictory to those duties which we owe to God and our neighbour.

There is one other particular which serves strongly to characterise false Pleasure; and that is, “The raising and warming the passions.” Whatever Pleasure is found to have this effect, though not absolutely criminal in itself, may justly be dreaded, as dangerous in its consequences; and ought by all means to be shunned on that account. But I shall refer what I have to say more concerning it to the next discourse, when I shall consider it more especially, as introductory to what I have to urge, concerning the gratification of the passions; or, with regard to indulgence in those Pleasures which are merely sensual.

You have however, my young friends, thus far, clear directions whereby to guide yourselves; and if you are sincerely desirous to approve yourselves before God and man,

you will put a check upon your pleasurable pursuits; and examine yourselves, with regard to those pursuits, by the plain and intelligible marks which have been here laid down: Nor will you ever think yourselves justified in any indulgence which is “inconsistent with the whole of your nature; which injures either your time or your health, your fortune or your character; or which incapacitates you in any degree, from performing the duties of indispensable obligation to God and to man.”

Think not that while your Pleasures are under these restraints, you will be debarred from all satisfactions and amusements; think not that thus bound by the laws of reason and religion, you must for ever bid adieu to cheerfulness and delight. Believe me, you will find quite the contrary on experience; and I shall hope to point out to you in the sequel, such a fund of true and substantial Pleasure, as will not only infinitely counter-balance the loss of all which vice in its gayest moments can boast, but such as will shew you the emptiness of all that boasting;

and satisfy you fully, that the nearest, surest road to the mansion of true Pleasure, is through the temple of persevering Virtue. Yes, my young friends, Pleasure, as under the guidance of virtue, is man's greatest good; as Virtue is the only unerring guide to true Pleasure and to real happiness. The plainest arguments of reason fully prove that it must be so; God hath so constituted man, that he can arrive at happiness no other way, and the blessed religion, which he hath instituted with such labour of love, fully declares to us, that piety and goodness alone can either make us happy in ourselves, or recommend us to the favour of our Redeemer. To come to him is to come to LIFE. And with what reason, nature, God and revelation uniformly declare, the experience of man, in all places and in all ages, combines its evidence; pronouncing, with the wise King of Israel, of all merely animal and earthly pursuits, "That they are vanity and vexation of spirit; and that to fear God and keep his commandments, as it is the whole duty, so it is the unquestionable happiness of man."

You would not be wiser (my young friends) than the whole race of men who have gone before you ; you would not act counter to reason, nature, God, and revelation ! Think, if you should unhappily so act, how utterly without excuse you will be before men, before God ! how bitterly, how grievously self-condemned in the end, and what keen reproach you must feel in the awful forum of impartial conscience !

SERMON X.

PART II.

On Pleasure.

ECCLESIASTES xi. 9.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes:—But, know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

IT has been advanced by some, “That Pleasure is not only the great end, but the main principle of human actions;” a position, which, if Pleasure be rightly understood, may, doubtless, well be allowed: For, there cannot be a higher testimony to the goodness and love of the great Author of our being, than the certain assurance we have, that in all his dispensations towards us, he means our happiness only; and desires us, with parental affection, to walk diligently in the way of duty, because it is the sure way to pleasantness and peace. On the other hand,

nothing can be more false and destructive than this position, if Pleasure be ill-understood, and as such immoderately pursued. It is of such Pleasure that Solomon speaks in the text, and of which he pronounces from his own fatal experience, That the end of it in this life is Vanity ; the consequence in the next, Judgment !

Willing, therefore, my young friends, to guard you from the delusion of the latter, to secure to you the happy and the full possession of the former ; I proposed to consider Pleasure in the general ; and, to this end, the Nature, and the Boundaries of true Pleasure were laid down in the last discourse : where it was shewn, that no Pleasure can be true, or worthy of a wise man's pursuit, which is not agreeable to the whole of our nature, or which is not consistent with our moral and religious obligations : particularly if it interferes with, or prejudices our time, our fortune, our health, our character, or, in one word, any of the duties which we owe to God, our neighbour, or ourselves : It is a Pleasure highly unworthy a rational being,

and that which will most certainly defeat the end at which it aims.

Let me just observe further, that it is very possible, the pleasure may be extremely dangerous, and cautiously to be shunned, which is not immediately attended with any of the ill effects just enumerated; for though it may injure us in none of these particulars, yet it may possibly tend to raise and inflame the passions; more easily kept in subjection, God knows, than reduced into obedience, when they have once risen up in rebellion and tyranny.

There is nothing to which a wise or a good man will, and indeed must attend more, if he would preserve the character of wisdom and goodness, than the subjection of his passions; than the constant and steady government of his inferior appetites and desires: For he is well convinced how predominant they are, if once indulged, and how difficult to be restrained, if the reins of gratification are once thrown on their necks. Besides, he will at all times consider, that

though human laws, it is true, take cognifance only of the outward act, the laws of Jesus Chrift, the great legiflator of the heart, go much farther; and estimate, with ftrict propriety of juftice, the fecret intention, and the inward defire. Confequently, the man anxious to approve himfelf before the tribunal of this foul-difcerning Judge, will be no lefs cautious to preferve the purity, and integrity of the heart, the abfolute and intire government of the paffions, than he will to abftain from the overt-act, and the criminal indulgence.

On this account, he will by no means judge that Pleafure innocent or lawful, which, however indifferent or harmlefs it may be to others, raifes a tumult in his foul; fets on fire his paffions, and endangers the peace and tranquillity of his future life, by the probability it affords, that the tyrant appetites may dethrone and captivate the lawful monarch Reason.

In this cafe, it is true, every perfon muft in a great meafure judge for himfelf: Natures,

tempers, and dispositions vary: The flegmatic, the cold, and the dull may walk with safety, where the rapid, the warm, and the lively would fall into destruction. However, as the passions of youth in general, are warm and inflammable enough, it may be a caution well deserving their serious attention, to avoid all those pleasures which are likely to enkindle their passions; well ascertained that in their state of life, such Pleasures must be peculiarly dangerous, when reason hath not yet attained its perfect state, and the passions are in full strength and power; willing, as it were, to tyrannize the more, during the minority of Reason their Sovereign.

An additional argument to enforce this caution, may be drawn from the meanness, and the misfortune of a subjection to the passions; of a life spent in the mere gratifications of sense. This is an argument upon which I would expatiate a little; proposing to shew from various reasons, how unworthy, how much beneath man's dignity and his character, and how short of the end at which he aims, is the indulgence in sensual

Pleasures. To say that God has not annexed high satisfaction to the indulgence of the animal appetites, would be to contradict nature and fact: He has annexed high satisfactions, and that for the wisest and best reasons; and it is a striking instance of his paternal care and goodness, that these satisfactions are always received in the highest degree, when, in subserviency to their proper ends, the appetites are kept under due dominion; Excess in any of them, naturally and necessarily defeating their purpose, and occasioning pain and trouble, instead of real gratification.

This is wisely ordained by the great God of our being, as if it were to remind us of the dignity of our nature, and to call us to assert that dignity: For, certainly, the pursuit of those sensual Pleasures, which are entirely animal, which belong to us in common with the animal world, which are designed merely to keep up and continue animal existence, and in the enjoyment of which, the animals, probably, have very much the superiority over man; Certainly, the pursuit of such Plea-

fures is infinitely beneath the character and the dignity of a creature, whose animal and inferior part is but the prison of a divine and immortal soul; ordained to share the inheritance of angels, while the body moulders in corruption, and returns to its original dust.

Lives there a man who would wish to give up this glorious birth-right? To be, and to be esteemed an animal only?—All body and no soul? Born to breathe out a short miserable existence in this world, and then to rot and be lost for ever, amidst worms and corruption?—Let such a man indulge his sensual appetites; let him eat and drink, for to-morrow he dies! But you (my young friends) triumphant in the possession of an immortal soul, labour continually to assert and maintain the dominion of that soul. Your high, your true dignity is, that you are made in the image and similitude of God; sons of reason, of holiness, of immortality. Yours are the glorious, the rational hopes of an eternity, gratified with all the blessings of knowledge, purity, and love! Can you then conceive a meaner or more despicable choice

than that, which gives up these inestimable hopes, for the sordid gratifications of appetite and sense? Wretched Esau! what a figure does he make in the annals of time, and the estimate of wisdom, who, for a miserable mess of pottage, transferred the benefits of his birth-right to his brother!—Ye far more wretched Esaus, who sell your heavenly birth-right for the poor and paltry indulgences of the flesh; ye thoughtless and unhappy men, who live merely to gratify those appetites, in which your fellow commoners of the plains so much excel you! O think what you will appear in the estimate of Eternal Wisdom, exchanging immortality and glory for sense and sorrow! Enjoy the good things that are present; fill yourselves with costly wine and ointments; let none of you go without his part of your voluptuousness; for this is your portion, and this is your lot*:—But know, that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

Indeed, there is almost no necessity for a divine judgment with respect to these things;

* Wisd. ii. 7—9.

so despicably miserable are they in themselves, so fraught with poison and stings of their own, to punish and destroy ! Consider only how short, at the best, how transitory and passing is the moment of actual enjoyment in every sensual gratification ; and how small a portion of time,—compared with that employed in preparation, in planning and devising schemes of iniquitous voluptuousness, and in sad and painful reflections upon those schemes, when completed even to the utmost wish of the unhappy deviser ;—how small a portion, compared with the past, and the future, remains, a poor pittance for the actual indulgence. Call to the bar of reason and reflection the epicure, the drunkard, or the libertine ; and let them, in the sober moments of calm retrospection, declare, how very small a portion of time those pleasures have engrossed, which have engaged so much sollicitude in pursuit, and which are attended with so many and tedious distresses in consequence : which, so far from refreshing, cheering, and comforting the mind on review, will either bear no reflection at all, or obtrude reflections of the most painful sort. This is another

striking particular to shew us the vanity, and the evil of sensual Pleasures ; “ they will not bear reflection ! ” And, when half the satisfaction of human life consists in reflection, pleasing reflection on the past,—sweet and soothing introducer of comfortable hopes and expectations for the future ;—what vain and thoughtless prodigals must they be, who pursue such Pleasures, as will at once destroy the power of reflection on the past, and damp every hope of delight from the future ?

But, the truth is, merely sensual Pleasures have consequences more affecting than these ; and it would be well indeed, if their worst Evil was, that they would bear no reflection ! Happy indeed would it be for the devotee to those Pleasures, if a total annihilation of thought could take place ; if, after the short, the momentary indulgence, a perfect oblivion could shroud the foul deeds in eternal darkness !—How alarming a consideration ! for must not those needs be worthy Pleasures, whose utmost praise, whose utmost merit is, that to be forgotten soon as enjoyed, would give to man the most substantial comfort ?

But, alas ! this negative felicity can never be allowed to the pursuits of passion. They cannot be forgotten ; they will bear no cheering reflection, no retrospect delightful to the human thought ; but, they will force upon that thought a thousand keen remonstrances, sufficient to murder all repose, and mar all the felicity which they have so fondly proffered to their deluded votaries. The reason is obvious : God and nature have designed that man's true Pleasure should proceed from his nobler part, the Soul ; that soul is utterly passive at least, in merely sensual indulgences ; it is the animal only, it is the earthly body, which predominates and directs in these. The soul, superior in her views, sits as a captive, indignant in her chains, refusing her concurrence, and continually upbraiding her tyrant for the servitude she suffers. Hence those keen reflections, hence those pangs of conscience, that torment of the mind, which the guilty sensual suffer, and which every human creature must suffer, who would make his animal and inferior nature a slave to that godlike principle of reason and immortality which he has derived from God,

and which, properly improved, will advance him even to the throne of that God himself. "For he that overcometh, says the great inspirer of our hopes, shall sit down with me upon my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne."

It almost degrades our reason, to think that arguments are necessary to prove the criminality, the absurdity, the baseness of merely sensual pursuits: Alas! that the too general conduct of mankind should prove those arguments neither improper or unnecessary. But if those already urged are not sufficient, let us still go further, and remark, that these Pleasures, like the poor bodies which are the seat of them, will not only perish and leave us; but (which is a circumstance peculiarly grievous) they are often found to leave the bodies themselves even in this life; it being nothing uncommon for the power of gratifying the sensual appetites utterly to be withdrawn, while, horrible curse! the fierce and impotent desire still remains to torture and to punish!

For, herein again, as in every particular, we may note the wise and providential disposition of God; who hath so constituted our nature, that while the regular and allowed gratification of its inferior passions, is attended with great and ample satisfaction, and never is known to occasion either pain or decay: the unallowed gratification of those passions not only falls short of its end, by introducing numberless evils and disquietudes both to body and mind, but very frequently enfeebles, or totally destroys the very power of gratification.

And, of all pitiable objects beneath the sun, imagination surely cannot picture forth to itself an object so pitiable as the man, who, ignorant of every Pleasure but the sordid ones of sense, hath run so fast his mad career, in the vile service of those Pleasures, that he hath outstripped, as it were, and left lagging behind, the enfeebled powers of his nature and constitution; and burnt up with fierce desire, looks with the keen torment of bitter reflection, on the sensualist once wallowing

in the mire of foul indulgence, the miserable sensualist which he once was !

Oh, my young friends, would you escape the horrors of such a despicable state, learn in early youth to keep the rein upon your inferior desires : Resolve to give reason the rule, and firmly establish the dominion of the soul over appetite and sense. For, though it is scarce to be conceived that there can be an object more miserable, than the man incapacitated to gratify his passions, while still cursed with the desire to do so ; yet, this misery is frequently augmented by many severe and aggravating circumstances : Some of them arising from the poignancy of that reflection, and the scorpion stings of that conscience, which we spoke of before ; circumstances, edged no doubt with a peculiar keenness by the just vengeance of heaven, in order to convince the man, so long a mere slave to his body, that he has not a body only : These torments prove feelingly that he has a soul.

But, besides these, even the body itself, that poor perishing system of clay, which he hath so pampered, fed and nourished; which he hath so indulged, with all the desires of its kindred brutes; that body, which he hath made the instrument of all his unworthy pursuits and desires; Even that very body, as if reverting against its abuse, as if, in combination with the soul, to teach man better wisdom, and to assert the high prerogative of his nature; even that very body will, by severest diseases and acutest pains, convict the man, that the unrestrained gratification of sensual Pleasures, was never designed for him; and that the certain consequence of such Pleasure is no less the debilitation and destruction of the animal, than it is the disgrace, and will be the eternal punishment of the rational nature!

For, it has been well, and very reasonably presumed, that the passions which men encourage, and the principles which they have imbibed, and made the ruling ones of their lives, will not only continue with them in a state of future existence, but continue in that

state, if evil, to be their chief tormentors. For the foundation of hell is certainly laid even here, in men's own depraved dispositions and habits: it is not to be supposed that a miraculous change should be wrought upon them at death: Such as they depart out of this world, such must they enter into the next: And in this view, how easy is it to conceive the horrible, the inexpressible torture men must suffer from the tyranny and dominion of those passions, which, for ever incapable of gratification, must remain, like vultures gnawing at the heart!

It may perhaps be said, that this reasoning holds with less force in regard to merely sensual appetites and passions, than any other; for, as they owe their existence to the body, so with the death of that body it may be presumed that they will also die and be done away: But this reasoning will not hold, on many accounts, since the subjection of the soul to the body, in the first place, tends greatly to sensualize the soul itself; to degrade its ideas, and to render it earthly, mean, and base: since, again, no man can

so pursue merely animal propensities, as not to engage the soul, and at length totally to immerge and defile it with them ; for so close is the union of our natures, that however the one may awhile oppose the other, yet, so painful and dissatisfactory is the struggle, that it will certainly at length subside ; and the nature, whether animal or rational, to which we give the preference, will assuredly bring the other to a consent and concurrence with it. Besides, sensual Pleasures, and the indulgence of the animal passions, have so natural and necessary a tendency to absorb every noble faculty and sentiment in the soul, that it is easy to conceive the powers of that soul not only absorbed in brutish sensuality, but lost at once to every thing great and good, while every thing worthless and abominable springs up in the rank, uncultivated soil.

For, such is the nature of man, that as the studious and diligent culture even of one Virtue necessarily improves and meliorates the rest ; so, with respect to Vice, suffer but one to grow rampant and luxuriant in the soul, and, like a baneful weed, it will shed its poi-

sonous influence around, destroy the growth of every thing salutary near it, and suffer only weeds and poison, like itself, to spread and flourish.

The truth is, you may as well expect the man of Religion and Virtue to allow himself in the most vicious practices, as the Sensualist, the Slave to his Passions, to cultivate Virtue in his heart; or, while he indulges his appetites, to improve his rational and divine nature: So that, to the other evils attending the indulgence of the Passions, this may be added, that were not this indulgence criminal in itself, contrary to the laws, and most certainly subjecting us to the just judgment of our Redeemer; yet would it assuredly subject us to that judgment, yet would it assuredly be criminal, and attended with the most fatal consequences to our eternal welfare, in that it utterly precludes all moral improvement, and incapacitates for that purification and holiness of heart, without which, we are informed, no man shall see God!

More than this need not be offered to convince you, my young friends, of the meanness,

the sinfulness, the many and certain ill consequences to your present and future peace, which must follow an indulgence in sensual Pleasures; Pleasures, which belong to one part of your nature only, and that infinitely the lowest; Pleasures common to you with the animals, and perhaps (as they are animals only) such as they enjoy much more than man, whose rational nature places him far above these sensual sordid gratifications. And yet,—what a reproach to reason!—Man even in these low and bestial pursuits, runs riot in a scandalous excess, unknown to the animals themselves!

But further than this, these Pleasures are short and passing; bear no reflection or review; are accompanied with the severest reproaches of mind, often with the acutest pains and torments of body; and the sad total of the whole account at the end is, a soul alienated for ever from its God, and destined to pass an eternity of despair amidst all the horrors of self-condemnation*.

* See by all means the fine passages of Cicero, on Pleasure, in his Treatise on Old Age. Sect. 12, &c. Edit. Olivet.

Are not all these arguments sufficient to raise in your souls (my young friends) a thorough indignation at, and a firm resolve to guard against, the tyranny of those sensual passions, which will work such woe, and bring down such destruction upon their deluded and abandoned devotees?

You cannot have so little taste for genuine Pleasure, you cannot have so little sentiment for true honour, you cannot have so little prudence for your own interests, your own most important interests in time and eternity, as to enslave yourselves to this vile tyranny; as to degrade your rational and immortal nature beneath that of the beasts which perish; as to leave the food of angels, and to feed upon husks with swine; as to destroy all your own precious hopes and expectations in this life, as to destroy all the fond hopes and expectations of those who are solicitous for your welfare, as to destroy all those hopes in future life, which are the peculiar prerogative and distinguishing glory of man: As, in short, to live the life of animals on earth,

and to become the companions of devils hereafter: And this, all this for the poor, passing, ruinous indulgence of appetites, which, however they may sparkle in the glass, in the end, bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder.

Our next discourses will verify these general remarks; for we will give instances of some sensual Pleasures, which, however commonly pursued, will appear to be fatally productive of every evil consequence we have here enumerated.

And when this shall be found to be the case, let me earnestly entreat that you will carefully store up these considerations in your minds: Man, in general, but youth in particular, hath no enemy so great, as the enemy within; the depraved and strong passions of his fallen nature. Nor hath religion any work more important, and perhaps more difficult, than the duly regulating, and properly governing those passions. It will certainly tend to facilitate this important work, if you are justly sensible of its difficulties, and

of the imminent dangers which attend its neglect; and nothing can make you more sensible hereof, than a right knowledge and constant remembrance of the innumerable and destructive evils, which attend the indulgence of your passions.

Keep this ever in view, and I dare pronounce, that through the grace of God, you will sail clear, (my young friends) nor be shipwrecked on those rocks, where so many of the hopeful and amiable have unhappily been lost. And though the violent gales of domineering passion may chance to blow you transverse; though your vessel may be endangered, or even suffer something in the storm; yet fear not: A constant eye to your principles will guide you aright; nor will it be possible that reason and virtue should ever totally sink and be lost in your hearts, if once clearly convinced, you ever retain a just and feeling remembrance of this truth; "That the passions, however good servants, are cruel and tyrannical lords; which never fail to keep their slaves in miserable, painful and distressful captivity, and in the end to plunge them

into the black and horrible dungeons of remorse and despair."

ANECDOTES respecting Pleasure.

(1.) The following pourtrait of vicious Pleasure is given by an ingenious writer, after the manner of Plato. "Pleasure, says he, is a beautiful harlot sitting in her chariot, whose four wheels are pride, gluttony, lust, and idleness. The two horses are prosperity and abundance; the two drivers are indolence and security: Her attendants and followers are guilt, grief, late repentance (if any) and often death and ruin. Many great men, many strong men, many rich men, many hopeful men, and many young men have come to their end by her, but never any enjoyed full and true content by means of her."

(2.) The excellence of the noble allegory subjoined is such, as to afford hopes that it may stand as an apology for its length; it was originally written by an old Author, named Prodicus, but recommended and embellished by Socrates; and has lately been honoured by

elegant translations into English verse *. It is a description of Virtue and Pleasure making their court to Hercules, under the appearance of two beautiful women. “ When Hercules, says the venerable moralist, was in that part of his youth, in which it was natural for him to consider what course of life he ought to pursue, he one day retired into a desert, where the silence and solitude of the place very much favoured his meditations. As he was musing on his present condition, and very much perplexed in himself on the state of life he should choose, he saw two women of a larger stature than ordinary, approaching towards him. One of them had a very noble air, and graceful deportment; her beauty was natural and easy, her person clean and unspotted, her eyes cast towards the ground with an agreeable reserve; her motion and behaviour full of modesty, and her raiment white as snow. The other had a great deal of Health and Floridness in her countenance, which she had helped with an artificial colouring, and endeavoured to appear more than ordinarily graceful in her mein, by

* See Sermon 11th, part 2. at the beginning.

a mixture of affectation in all her gestures. She had a wonderful confidence and assurance in her looks, and all the variety of colours in her dress, that she thought were the most proper to shew her complexion to an advantage. She cast her eyes upon herself, then turned them on those who were present, to see how they liked her, and often looked on the figure she made in her own shadow. Upon her nearer approach to Hercules, she stepped before the other lady (who came forward with a regular composed carriage) and running up to him, accosted him after the following manner: “ My dear Hercules, I find you are very much divided in your own thoughts upon the way of life which you ought to choose. Be my friend and follow me. I’ll lead you into the possession of pleasure, out of the reach of pain, and remove you from all the noise and disquietude of business. The affairs either of war or peace shall have no power to disturb you. Your whole employment shall be to make your life easy, and to entertain every sense with its proper gratification. Sumptuous tables, beds of roses, clouds of perfumes, concerts of musick,

crowds of beauties, are all in a readiness to receive you : Come along with me into this region of delights, this world of Pleasure, and bid farewell for ever to care, to pain, to business."—Hercules, hearing the fair inviter talk after this manner, interrupted her a moment to enquire her name ; To which she answered, " My friends, and those who are well acquainted with me, call me HAPPINESS ; but my enemies, and those who would injure my reputation, have given me the name of PLEASURE."—By this time the other lady was come up, who addressed herself to the young hero in a very different manner. " Hercules, said she, I offer myself to you, because I know you are descended from the gods, and give proofs of that descent by your love to virtue, and application to the studies proper for your age. This makes me hope you will gain both for yourself and me an immortal reputation. But before I invite you into my society and friendship, I will be open and sincere with you, and must lay down this as an established truth, That there is nothing truly valuable which can be purchased without pains or labour. The gods

have set a price upon every real and noble Pleasure. If you would gain the favour of the Deity, you must be at the pains of worshipping Him; if the friendship of good men, you must study to oblige them; if you would be honoured by your country, you must take care to serve it: In short, if you would be eminent in war or peace, you must become master of all the qualifications that can make you so. These are the only terms and conditions upon which I can propose happiness." Here (continues the fabulist) the goddess of PLEASURE broke in upon the discourse; "You see, Hercules, by her own confession, that the way to her Pleasure is long and difficult; whereas that which I propose is short and easy."—"Alas!" returned the other amiable figure (whose visage glowed with a passion made up of scorn and pity) "what are the Pleasures you propose!—To eat before you are hungry; to drink before you are athirst; to sleep before you are tired; to gratify appetites before they are raised, and to raise such appetites as nature never planted! You never heard the most delicious musick, which is, the praise of one's self; nor saw

the most beautiful object, which is, the work of one's own hands. Your votaries pass away their youth in a dream of mistaken Pleasure, while they are hoarding up anguish, torment, and remorse for old age. As for me, I am the friend of Gods, and of good men; an agreeable companion to the artisan, an household guardian to the fathers of families, a patron and protector of servants, an associate in all true and generous friendships. The banquets of my votaries are never costly, but always delicious; for none eat or drink at them who are not invited by hunger and thirst: Their slumbers are sound, and their waking hours are chearful. My young men have the pleasure of hearing themselves praised by those who are in years; and they who are in years of being honoured by those who are young. In a word, my followers are favoured by the gods, beloved by their acquaintances, esteemed by their country, and, after the close of their labours, honoured by posterity, and received up into heaven."—— Here, says the Mythogolift, they ended: We know by the account we have of the life of this memorable heroë in ancient story, to

which of these two fair advocates he gave up his heart. And, I believe every one who reads this will do him the justice to approve his choice of Virtue, in preference to voluptuousness and vicious indulgence.

(3.) “ There is not, says Mr. Addison, a common saying which has a better turn of sense in it, than what we often hear in the mouths of the vulgar, “ That custom is a second nature.” Dr. Plot, in his history of Staffordshire, tells us of an Idiot who chancing to live within the sound of a clock, and always amusing himself with counting the hour of the day whenever it struck, the clock being spoiled by some accident, the Idiot continued to strike and count the hour without the help of it, in the same manner as he had done when it was intire. Though I dare not vouch for the truth of this story, it is very certain that custom has a mechanical effect upon the body, at the same time that it has a very extraordinary influence on the mind, and a wonderful efficacy in making every thing pleasant to us. ’Tis very observable, for instance, how our delight in any particu-

lar study, art or science, rises and improves in proportion to the application which we bestow upon it. Thus what was at first an exercise, becomes at length an entertainment ; our employments are changed into our diversion : The mind grows fond of those actions she is accustomed to, and is drawn with reluctance from those paths in which she has used to walk. Now, if we consider attentively this property of human nature, it may instruct us in very fine moralities. In particular, I would recommend to every one that admirable precept, which Pythagoras is said to have given to his disciples, and which that Philosopher must have drawn from the observation I have enlarged upon : *Optimum vitæ genus eligito, nam consuetudo faciet jucundissimum* : “ Pitch upon that course of life, which is the most excellent, and custom will render it the most delightful.” Men whose circumstances will permit them to choose their own way of life, are inexcusable if they do not pursue that which their judgment must tell them is the most laudable. The voice of reason is more to be regarded than the bent of any present inclination, since by the rule

abovementioned, inclination will at length come over to reason, though we can never force reason to comply with inclination. This observation may also teach us to take particular care, when we are once settled in a regular course of life, how we too frequently indulge ourselves even in the most innocent diversions and entertainments; since the mind may insensibly fall off from the relish of virtuous actions, and by degrees exchange that pleasure which it takes in the performance of its duty, for delights of a much more inferior and unprofitable nature. Besides this, every the most sensual and irreligious man may hence be taught to overlook those hardships and difficulties, which are apt to discourage him from the prosecution of a virtuous life. "The gods, said Hesiod, have placed labour before virtue: The way to her is at first rough and difficult, but grows more smooth and easy the further you advance in it." The man who proceeds in it with steadiness and resolution, will in a little time find that her ways are ways of pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace: In short, the practice of religion will not only be at-

tended with that pleasure, which naturally accompanies those actions to which we are habituated, but also with those supernumerary joys of heart, which arise from the consciousness of such a pleasure; from the satisfaction of acting up to the dictates of reason, and from the prospect of an happy immortality." See Spectator, N^o. 447.

(4.) A gentleman lately deceased, in a letter to his only son, has this just idea of the subject. "The Pleasure, says he, of being good, will alone bear the test of the question," what is Pleasure? "Every other temporary gratification, however beautiful, and in its appearance alluring, like the sensitive plant fades away at the approach of rational reflection, and discovering its deceit, imbitters the recollection. Goodness is ever the same; subject to no change; lovely in its aspect, charming in enjoyment, and at each review, with the most pleasing complacency heightens the remembrance."

(5.) Dr. Young's is a noble idea of true, rational and Christian Pleasure, and must

please the reader on a subject of this critical importance: In his 8th Night he says,

“ Who can resist her charms ? Or should, Lorenzo !
 What mortals shall resist, where angels yield ?
 Pleasure’s the mistress of ethereal powers ;
 For her contend the rival Gods above :
 Pleasure’s the mistress of the world below,
 And well it is for man, that pleasure charms :
 How would all stagnate, but for pleasure’s ray !
 How would the frozen stream of action cease !
 What is the pulse of this so busy world ?—
 The love of pleasure: That, through every vein
 Throws motion, warmth; and shuts out death
 from life.

And as her Empire wide, her praise is just.
 Patron of pleasure! doater on delight !
 I am thy rival ; pleasure I profess ;
 Pleasure, the purpose of my gloomy song.
 Pleasure, is nought but Virtue’s gayer name ;
 I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low ;
 Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower.—
 Brought forth by wisdom, nurs’d in discipline,
 By patience taught, by perseverance crown’d,
 She rears her head Majestic : Round her throne,
 (Erected in the bosom of the just,)
 Each virtue list’d, forms her manly guard.
 Great Legislator! Scarce so great, as kind !

If men are rational, and love Delight,
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice;
In the transgression lies the penalty;
And they the most indulge, who most obey.

Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, Pleasure came from Heaven.
Pleasure first succours virtue; in return
Virtue gives pleasure an eternal reign.
Glide then for ever, pleasure's sacred stream!
Through Eden as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And fosters every growth of human life;
Makes a new Eden where it flows;— but such,
As must be lost, Lorenzo! by thy fall.

Her glorious ends, by kind, or by degree
When Pleasure violates, 'tis then a Vice,
And vengeance too; it hastens into Pain.
From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy;
From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death;
Heav'n's justice this proclaims, and hat his love.
What greater evil can I wish my foe,
Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask
Unbroach'd by just authority, ungau'd
By temperance, by reason unrefin'd?
A thousand Demons lurk within the Lee.
Heav'n, others, and ourselves! uninjur'd these,
Drink deep, the deeper then, the more divine.
Angels are angels from indulgence there:

'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a God.

—But, without breathing, man as well might hope
For life, as without piety for peace."

(6.) Sir Matthew Hale, in his excellent Contemplations, has the following remark respecting temporal delights, if destitute of true religion. " They are trimmed up with report and expectation ; but in reality and in themselves, they are like the apples of Sodom, beautiful to the eye, but when touched vanishing into dust. Solomon was certainly the wisest, and externally-happiest King that the world ever knew. He had the greatest opportunity that ever man had, to take a full estimate of the world in its choicest enjoyments, by reason of his wealth and peace, his power and interest. He had a vast judgment and understanding of all things in nature, and could with exquisite skill and relish search into and attain all that was extremely good and desirable in this world : And this he did, neither brutishly, as led thereto by sensuality, nor superficially, or barely by speculation ; but he made it his business not only strictly to inquire into it by his reason and judgment,

but also really to experience and try the matter after which he thus fought. And at length what was the result?—After having thus climbed as it were to the summit of all worldly enjoyment, and beheld the rest of mankind, as well as they were able, reaching and clambering towards this precipice of temporal felicity,

(—Dum monte potitus

Speñtat anhelantem dura ad fastigia turbam)

From this high mountain he bespeaks mankind in his Book of Ecclesiastes, as it were in this manner: “Ye children of men, I see you are full of great expectations, and by means of worldly gratification; and you take much pains for the acquisition of them. Listen awhile to what I shall say. I have had the opportunities of making a full discovery of the best that this world can afford; wealth, honour, pleasures of every sort and kind; and such opportunities as none of you ever had, or can expect, in order to the like discovery. I have denied myself in nothing that this world can administer to give me content; I have had the most exquisite taste and enjoyment of all; and I have now

arrived at the very Fastigium, the very highest point of this mountain of pleasure and worldly fruition. But I find myself wholly deceived in what I expected: I looked indeed for as high gratification as you do; but now, that I have tasted of every dish, I find them all to be but vanity and vexation of spirit. Nay, I have not only been disappointed in what I expected from them, but instead thereof, I have reaped nothing but sorrow, anxiety, vexation. You do therefore deceive yourselves in all the pains you take, while ye think that from these sublunary enjoyments ye shall acquire happiness, yea, or obtain real gratification in them. Be wise then, and take warning by me, the greatest example that ever the world knew of this kind: give up these laborious, busy and vain pursuits of yours; and take with you only this concluding lesson of mine, which I have learned by infallible experience; "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

(7.) How glorious a share of true pleasure must Pliny the younger have enjoyed, when,

having determined to gratify the public with 50,000 livres, he charged his estate with 3000 per annum, and ordered the sum to be employed for the subsistence of the poor of both sexes; thus by his self-denial, diffusing joy through many a worthy heart! One of his friends, however, reproved him for so doing, observing how absurd it was to have thus stripped himself of his possessions, by the imposing upon himself such a law: To which he replied, “ And is it not right, to give the preference to public, rather than to private utility; to eternity rather than to time; and to take more care about doing well, than the possessing much?”

(8.) Apicius was a great epicure, according to the low and vulgar sense of the word; but Apicius was not a Pliny; and yet Apicius had his pleasures. He had eaten, it seems, of a certain fish at Minturna in Campania, where he was told, that the species was much larger in Africa. Upon this he immediately equips a vessel, and sets sail for that coast. The navigation was difficult and dangerous: But what will not hunger do? Apicius is a man

of pleasure, and appetite, every league he travels, increases the necessity of gratification. When they arrived on the coast of Africa, several fishing boats, already apprized of his voyage, came to him, and brought him some of the fishes in question; when, how great was his surprize and chagrin, to find that they were not at all bigger than those of Minturna! Instantly therefore, without being touched with the rational curiosity of seeing a country he had never visited before; without any regard to the prayers of the people in his train, who wanted the refreshments of the shore; Apicius ordered his pilots to return to Italy, and thus ended his memorable adventure.

(9.) It is with great satisfaction that we can quote the following, in honour of a living and exemplary character; and not unsuitably to the subject before us. Mr. Boswell in his account of General Paoli observes, that his notions of morality are high and refined; such as become the father of a nation. "He told me, one day; that his father had brought him up with great strictness, and that he had

very seldom deviated from the paths of virtue : That this was not from a defect of feeling and passion ; but that his mind being filled with important objects, his passions were employed in more noble pursuits than those of licentious pleasure.” I saw (continues the author) from Paoli’s example, the great art of preserving young men of spirit from the contagion of vice, in which there is often a species of sentiment, ingenuity and enterprize nearly allied to virtuous qualities. Shew a young man that there is more real spirit in virtue than in vice, and you have a surer hold of him during his years of impetuosity and passion, than by convincing his judgment of all the rectitude of ethicks.

(10.) Descartes (says a pleasant writer in the Guardian) was the first who discovered a certain part of the brain, called by anatomists the Pineal Gland, to be the immediate receptacle of the soul, where she is affected with all sorts of perceptions, and exerts all her operations by the intercourse of the animal spirits, which run through the nerves that are thence extended to all parts of the

body. On the strength of this Hypothesis the writer (assuming the character of an invisible investigator of the mind) founds the following ingenious and important remarks, whose moral is strikingly obvious and worthy of attention. I one day, says he, entered into the Pineal Gland of a certain person, who seemed very fit to give me an insight into all that which constitutes the happiness of him who is called "A man of Pleasure." But I found myself not a little disappointed in my notions of the pleasures which attend a voluptuary, who has shaken off the restraints of reason. His Intellectuals, I observed, were grown unserviceable by too little use, and his Senses were decayed and worn out by too much. That perfect inaction of the higher powers prevented appetite, in prompting him to sensual gratifications, and the outrunning of natural appetite produced a loathing instead of a Pleasure. I there beheld the intemperate cravings of youth without the enjoyments of it, and the weakness of old age, without its tranquillity. When the passions were teized and aroused by some powerful object, the effect was, not to delight or

sooth the mind, but to torture it between the returning extremes of appetite and satiety. I saw the wretch racked, at the same time, with a painful remembrance of past miscarriages, a distaste of the present objects that sollicit his senses, and a secret dread of futurity; and I could see no manner of relief or comfort in the soul of this miserable man, but what consisted in preventing his cure by inflaming his passions, and suppressing his reason. But though it must be owned, he had almost quenched that light which his Creator had set up in his soul; yet, in spite of all his efforts, I observed at certain seasons frequent flashes of Remorse strike through the gloom, and interrupt that satisfaction he enjoyed in hiding his own deformities from himself." See Guardian, No. 35.

S E R M O N XI.

On Impurity.

P A R T I.

PROVERBS vii. 24, &c.

Hearken now therefore unto me, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways; go not astray in her paths: For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

CICERO has well observed, “ That there is not a more pernicious evil to Man, than the lust of sensual pleasure; the fertile source of every detestable crime, and the peculiar enemy of the divine and immortal soul *.” This remark was fully verified in the last discourse, wherein the baseness and criminality of sensual pleasures were shewn at large; where they were proved not only to be

* Nullam capitaliorem pestem, quam corporis voluptatem, hominibus a naturâ datam: Hinc patriæ proditores, &c. &c.—See de Senectute, and the last Discourse, p. 98.

unworthy a man, but destructive even of the end at which they aim; in that they are merely animal, common to us with the beasts that perish; in that they are of short continuance, cloy upon repetition, bear no reflection, and bring no satisfaction to the thinking mind; but on the contrary, sting that mind with severest pangs while afflicting the body with terrible disease; and while depriving of the best joys, and most genuine pleasures of this life, incapacitating the immortal soul for any of the pure and refined joys of that which is to come.

This is true of all sensual Pleasures immoderately pursued, and gratified beyond the demands of reason and of nature. For full proof hereof, let us call to the bar of examination, First, the Pleasures of "IMPURITY," and then those of INTemperance." Let us develop their boasted claims, drag them to the full light of impartial truth, and shew, that what has been observed of sensual Pleasures in the general, belong to each of them with a strong and peculiar propriety.

Solomon here again * leads us the way; and in that chapter of his admirable and instructive Proverbs, whence the text is taken, describes in a beautiful and affecting manner, "A young man void of understanding," as all young men, in such circumstances, may well be judged: A young man, deluded, captivated and undone, by the fair speeches and flattering Hypocrisy of the subtile and pernicious Harlot. His painting is excellent; "I beheld, says he, among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the streets, near her corner; and he went the way to her house; in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night. And behold there met him a woman, with the attire of an Harlot, and subtile of heart: She is loud and stubborn: Her feet abide not in her house: Now is she without; now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner: With her much fair speech she caused this simple one to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him: He goeth after her immediately, as an ox goeth to the slaughter,

* See the text of the foregoing Sermon.

or a fool to the correction of the stocks: Till a dart strike through his liver! As a bird hasteth to the snare; and knoweth not that it is for his life."

Having thus painted in strong and lively colours the affecting truth, the wise man addresses himself to youth in general; and I could wish, my young friends, to bespeak you in his persuasive and instructive words, which I propose to make the foundation of what I shall deliver to you on this subject; Nice and delicate, I well know in itself, and demanding much prudence and caution in the discussion; but at the same time peculiarly needful, and never more so, than at a period, when the Vice of "Impurity" is spoken of with levity and smiles; and scarce deemed sinful, though it be in truth most abominable to God, most injurious to society, and most destructive of personal comfort and satisfaction.

With a view therefore to your preservation from its ruinous consequences, with a view to your purity and peace, "Hearken unto me,

now, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth:" while, with the sincerest purpose to keep you from thence, I point out to you the mischiefs and the miseries of "Her house" the subtle Harlot, Impurity; her house, which "is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."

I said the "mischiefs" and the "miseries" of her house: And can that be worthy to be pursued as a pleasure, as the chief and ruling pleasure of our lives, which will certainly repay our pursuit with mischiefs, and with miseries?—Yet such, my young friends, such unquestionably and invariably are the wretched wages, which the servants of Impurity receive.

I. In full proof hereof, consider First, how contradictory this vice is to the great laws of Nature and of Reason, of Society and Religion.

(1.) It is in immediate opposition to the first law of our "Nature," which enjoins the due subordination and subjection of our in-

ferior appetites and passions to the superior and ruling principle of the soul ; that principle which distinguishes man from the animal creation ; and which, as it is our noblest prerogative, so it is our highest duty, and our best happiness to cultivate and improve. What then can be so degrading to our nature, so contrary to the great purpose of our creation, as to reverse this first and important law, by giving the reins of dominion to an inferior and merely animal appetite, implanted in us, as a slave, to serve the purposes of our temporal existence ; but then to cease for ever ? An appetite, which, however well and wisely calculated by the great author of our being, for the ends of this life, is an appetite wholly of sense, with which, abstractedly considered, the mind has no concern ; but which, if indulged beyond the due bounds, tends above every sensual gratification to darken that mind, and to absorb all its noblest faculties ; for “ Wine and women take away the heart.” What then can be so contradictory to our nature, as to suffer a passion like this to usurp the dominion ; as to sink ourselves down to a level with, nay, and even beneath

the animal world ; when, by a due improvement of that godlike principle thus degraded, we might rise to a rank in the intelligent creation, equal perhaps, if not superior to that of angels !

(2.) Impurity, thus degrading our Nature, no less opposes the laws of “ Reason ;” whose peculiar office it is to direct our conduct and form our manners, in such a way, as becomes the rank and station we bear in the universe. And while we boast of that reason, what perverseness and folly is it to indulge a vice, and pursue a conduct, which is at once most opposite to, and most derogatory from the honour and the dictates of reason ? And can any thing be more so than the unrestrained gratification of impure desires, with which reason is so far from concurring, that men are obliged to lull its keen remonstrances in the tumult of passion, and the hurry of sensual pursuits ! Spite of all which, in full proof of its prevalence and power, it will often, in a silent moment, be heard : with severe truth it will upbraid if not convince the man of the utter contrariety of his conduct to the great

laws and purposes of his existence in this world. Hence it is, that Solomon, with so much justice, calls all those "Simple ones," and "Void of understanding," who suffer themselves to be deluded and undone by the flattering inticements of the harlot Impurity.

(3.) And, in further testimony of their want of understanding, or at least of their acting in direct opposition to its dictates; let such consider again, that the Vices of Impurity are in immediate contradiction to the laws of "Society;" those universal laws of justice, honour and virtue, upon which all society is founded, and upon the due observation whereof the happiness and the permanence of that society depends. Nothing, it is certain, conduces more to corrupt the morals and deprave the minds of youth, than the unrestrained gratification of impure and lustful desires: Nothing conduces more to spread a general corruption of manners; nothing more affects and harms the nearest and dearest interests of men; nothing introduces more distressful injuries; and nothing is a greater prejudice or discouragement to just and ho-

nourable marriage; that state of highest felicity, ordained by God himself; productive of the truest and most substantial comforts of the human race, and the only sure and infallible source of population! Can any thing then be conceived more pernicious and destructive to "Society" than a Vice, which is pregnant with so many evils; and which, considered in whatever view, is contrary to all its interests, and subversive of all its best foundations?

(4.) The laws of Nature, of Reason, of Society (calculated, in every respect, to produce and to secure the happiness of man) are but transcripts, if I may so say, of the "Divine Laws;" which, communicated to us by reason and revelation, give us the fairest ideas of His bright perfections, who is the God, the father, and the benefactor of the human race; and who never prescribed or enjoined one precept, but with a gracious view to the Good, the present and eternal good of his creatures. Hence all his injunctions in the divine revelation which he hath made of his will, with uniform beauty and excellence,

tend to instruct man in the true state of his nature; to inform him of its original dignity and unhappy fall; and particularly of its capability to assert again, through the mercies of Christ, all the privileges and the blessings of that native dignity. Called hereto by every most powerful and persuasive motive, man is informed that his triumph is sure, and his reward inestimable, if, superior to sense and to appetite, he improves the godlike principle of reason and virtue within him, and purifies himself, even as his God, his great pattern and exemplar, is pure. Hence, when the divine Redeemer delivered his instructive sermon on the mount, one amongst the first of his blessed aphorisms was, "Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" see Him now, on the elevated height of a contemplative mind, defecated from all the defilements of sin, and of sense; see Him hereafter, in the pure vision of perfect intellectual Pleasure. And, in conformity with this beatitude, we find our Lord not only discountenancing every external act of Impurity and Concupiscence; but

even levelling his heart-searching laws against that concupiscence itself; assuring mankind, that in the estimate of all discerning wisdom, the impure intention, if cherished in the heart, would as certainly constitute guilt, as the impure act and perpetration itself: “Whosoever looketh upon a woman, to lust after her,”—with this view and design—“hath already committed Impurity with her in his heart *.”

No further proof need be brought, to shew how contradictory to the law of God is the practice of Impurity. Indeed, it is so utterly and diametrically opposite to the whole spirit of the Christian Revelation, that whoever lives in the gratification of impure desires, must of necessity give up all hopes from the mercy of that Redeemer, the great business of whose life and death it was to redeem and purify his people from all iniquity, and to perfect them in holiness; that they might be fit to enjoy that kingdom, “where nothing defiling can ever enter.”

* Matt. v. 28.

There are, however, one or two considerations peculiar to the Christian Religion, which ought never to be omitted on this subject, as they are no less forcible in themselves, than they are adapted to work upon every thinking and ingenuous mind: These are drawn from the “Inhabitation of God’s Holy Spirit in the bodies of believers, as his temples;” and “from their being incorporated by faith, as living members, into the pure and immaculate body of Jesus Christ.” St. Paul urges them both in the sixth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. Concerning the latter he speaks thus, reasoning against every species and degree of Impurity; “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?—Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an Harlot?—” Shall I, when enjoying the highest and most honourable privileges that a human creature can enjoy, incorporated by faith into Christ, and made by baptism a member of his pure and precious body; shall I, in contempt of that privilege, in vile abuse of my Saviour, and to the utter disgrace and ruin of myself; shall I be so weak,

and so wicked, as to indulge a mean, momentary, debasing, and merely sensual appetite! —St. Paul disclaims the thought with an indignant “God forbid!” And may that God grant that we may all be enabled, with equal indignation, for ever to disclaim it!

But, he goes further, to mark in the strongest colours possible, the opprobrium, and the extreme sinfulness of this Vice: “What, know ye not (says he) that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you,—which ye have of God; and ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price, &c.?”—Can you then be so senseless, and so desperate in your guilt, as to defile and desecrate this holy temple, honoured with so divine and so pure an inhabitant? To desecrate it by the gratification of lusts, which are unworthy of your character, and common to you with the lowest of the herd; which degrade your nature, darken your reason, pollute your soul, destroy your peace, and alienate you from a God of purity for ever?—Oh, my young friends, ever bear in mind that, consecrated as you are to the service of Christ, that best of masters; dedicated

to him, when the cross was marked upon your innocent and infant brows ; ever bear in mind the high obligations under which your baptismal covenant lays you ; ever remember the inestimable privileges of that covenant, whereby you are made “ Members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven ; ” whereby the inhabitation of the blessed Spirit is promised and secured to you ; and let no temptations of defiling passion allure you to renounce these privileges, the noble charter of your birth, and the firm foundation of all your future hopes and happiness ! Well consider, what the gratification of youthful lusts and desires can bestow, adequate to the loss, to the misery which it will assuredly occasion : and while a just sense of what you are through Christ ; while a just gratitude for all the unspeakable blessings and honours arising from your union with him ; while an ingenuous shame lest you should forfeit or disgrace that union ; and while a lively and generous ardour to improve and walk worthy of it ;—while these considerations influence, animate and direct you, Take a view with me farther, of “ the mischiefs and the miseries ” which in-

fallibly arise from the practice of Impurity ; take a view of its necessary and natural ill-consequences, as well to others as to yourselves.

For, neither the laws of God or of man are founded in fancy or caprice : It is not to be supposed that the all-wise and all-bounteous Father of mankind would ever impose a precept upon his creatures, with a view to command or to prohibit aught that was unessential to their real well-being. Consummate in felicity as in glory, our God has not, cannot be supposed to have, any end either in creating or governing us, but the great, the benevolent end of our happiness ; and consequently, we may be assured that whatever he prohibits with paternal care and love, is destructive of that happiness. And like the laws of God, those of society also, founded on the basis of right reason and the mutual advantage of mankind, are, and ever ought to be highly respectable in our sight, as their observance tends not only to our own, but to the general peace and security.

Having therefore seen how contradictory to these laws the practice of Impurity is, we will enter a little into the spirit and the reason of them, and shew that they prohibit, with strict severity, this vice, because it is no less injurious to our neighbour, than it is in every respect injurious to ourselves. But copious as this topic is, and not possibly to be treated of as it ought in what remains of the present discourse, I will postpone it to the next: When, if it shall fully appear, as I persuade myself it will,—that the unbridled and unlawful gratification of impure and unchaste desires is prejudicial to society in the highest degree, inflicts the severest injuries, and brings the most complicated miseries upon our fellow-creatures; while at the same time it is in a peculiar manner destructive of personal peace and satisfaction; ruinous to the soul, the body, the reputation, the fortune: If these evils shall appear to be the natural and almost necessary consequences of this foul and pernicious Vice; certainly, my young friends, I shall not need many arguments to dissuade you from the practice and the pursuit of

that, which so far from giving pleasure, will pierce your souls with severest pain !

I have before observed to you *, and I cannot repeat the observation too often, how much and how fatally men are apt to deceive both themselves and others, through false names, and palliating appellations ; by which Vice is taught to assume a specious garb, and under that garb often gains admission, where, in her own native and deformed appearance, she would be seen with detestation, and rejected with horror. 'Tis peculiarly the case with respect to the destructive crime we would develop and decry, because fully ascertained, my young friends, of its malignant and fatal influence to all your best and most important interests. Mark how, to palliate its guilt—mark how, to hide its foul deformity, the subtle enemy of souls not only induces its abandoned votaries to treat it with the most unseemly and unbecoming lightness, and to speak of it even with all the boasting of detestable indecency ; but to call by the very name of “ MEN OF PLEASURE,” those

* Sermon on RIDICULE, p. 43.

miserable profligates, who are in every respect as undeserving of the name, as they are ignorant of the nature of true Pleasure. Men, who unrestrained by principle, uncontrolled by law human or divine, make no scruple of breaking through the most sacred ties, the most solemn obligations; hesitate not to wound with the keenest anguish, and to injure in the most irreparable manner, so they can but gratify those foul lusts and impure desires, which they dignify with the name of Pleasures. Oh my young friends, God forbid that, captivated by the specious name, you should ever commence "Men of Pleasure," to the degradation of your nature, the disgrace of your reason, the destruction of your present and eternal peace!—God forbid that you should ever act by so low a principle, as mere sense and appetite! and so far forget the dignity, the true honour, and great design of your present existence, as to suppose it possible that man can either attain true pleasure or true glory, by acting inconsistently with the laws of nature and of God! Be assured, whatever the libertine may boast, whatever the sons of sense and of passion

may dare to avow, that pursuits like theirs can never be attended with the least solid satisfaction, can never bring real Pleasure to rational and reflecting Man;—can never advance his true happiness in this life, and much less in the next: Because (and reason alone is sufficient to convince and satisfy every intelligent mind) because those pursuits are in direct contradiction to his Nature, to Reason, to the laws of man, and to the laws of God.

And surely, were it not possible or easy to trace out and fully discover the rational and solid foundation on which those laws are laid; surely, my young friends, it would discover no small share of self-sufficiency and arrogance, to imagine that by a conduct diametrically opposite to all these, we could attain satisfaction and peace. The supposition implies an idea of wisdom superior to that, not only of the wisest law-givers before us, but even of the great God himself. Yet, fully to trace out, and to shew in the strongest colours, the inexpressible folly and weakness of the sensual and impure;

of the “Men of Pleasure;” (well denominated by Solomon in the text, “Men void of understanding;”) These men continually proclaim by their lives and conduct this glaring absurdity; and profess themselves in deeds, if not in words, wiser than the God who made them; wiser than all the wise of every age; nay, wiser even than Nature and Reason themselves!—And shall these be denominated by a term of honourable import?—Rather call them by their true appellation, “Slaves of sense, slaves of sin, and of sorrow; enemies to God, to themselves, and to society;” Men who plunge their own souls and bodies, as well as those of their deluded fellow-creatures, into the bitterest distress and horror! those fellow-creatures, who, seduced by their insidious arts, despoiled of innocence and reputation, are at length introduced into a mode of life, shocking to human nature in general, but to the female nature doubtless most peculiarly shocking! And then, as if in horrid mockery of their ruin and their woe, these poor abandoned wretches, victims of unrelenting lust, are, like their seducers, branded with the name of Pleasure also! “Women of

Pleasure !” Oh shame to language and to sense ! Call them too by their just appellation, “ Women of infamy and of woe ! miserable fallen women ; robbed of all which adorns and dignifies the sex ; the most pitiable, as the most distressful, of all our sinful and suffering fellow-creatures !”

No, my young friends ; you have, and will, I trust, retain too much ingenuity and generous delicacy of soul, to sport with the miseries of poor profligates like these ; or to suppose that they, whose hearts are almost bursting with anguish and distress, can administer the blessed cup of full and real delight to the hearts of others ! ’Tis as impossible, as for night and darkness to gladden and glorify with the mid-day brightness of the Sun ! From other sources, and from other sentiments must flow those liberal and heart-felt joys, which vice can never share, and which misery and prostitution can never impart. Oh may the God, who is merciful to his creatures, who delighteth peculiarly in the service of those who early devote themselves to Him, may He preserve you, my young friends,

from the snares and delusions, peculiarly dangerous and peculiarly destructive, of unhappy ruined creatures like these ! God almighty shield you by the spirit of grace and of purity, from the “ House of the Harlot, which is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death !”

Oh, my God ! hear me for the young ones of the flock : For thy own honour’s sake, for the sake of their present and future peace, for the sake of their parents, who, with aching anxious hearts tremble for the perils and temptations which on all sides surround them ; nay, for the sake of virtue, religion and our country, Guard them, I beseech thee, from the flattering lips, and delusive incitements of the strange and evil woman ! Let not their hearts decline to her ways ; let them not go astray in her paths : Convince them of the shipwreck they must make, the loss, the miseries they must sustain from connections pernicious and fatal as these ! Preserve them, by thy holy spirit, pure in mind and chaste in life ; enable them to flee from and triumph over all youthful lusts ; teach

them continually to say with the faithful youth of old, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against my God?" And, like that youth, triumphant in virtue, may they be triumphant in its full and certain rewards; even in the invaluable satisfaction of a good and approving conscience; in the honour and reputation of this world; and in the present and eternal applause of Him, who hath pronounced the Pure in heart blessed; because they shall see God! To whom, &c. Amen!

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P A R T II.

On Impurity.

PROVERBS vii. 24, &c.

Hearken now therefore unto me, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways; go not astray in her paths: For she hath cast down many mighty; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

WE are told, in an ancient fable, "That when Hercules, having arrived at maturity, was about to set forward in his career of glory; he was put to the trial by Virtue and by Pleasure: The latter endeavouring to win him by all the arts of Seduction and Flattery, while the other strove to counterwork by every means possible, the subtle and delusive arguments of her dangerous adversary. The youth happily made a prudent choice; for, rejecting the syren songs of

Pleasure, he gave himself up to the guidance and direction of Virtue, and thus attained the Immortality he sought *."

The fable, my young friends, is fraught with instruction to You especially; and the great moral which it means to inculcate is, "That whatever youth would wish to arrive at true honour and true happiness, must scorn with a noble fortitude, the allurements of the Harlot Pleasure, and implicitly follow the counsels of true Virtue."

It is this important lesson which I am endeavouring to impress upon your minds: And, while an evil nature, and an evil world, while allurements and temptations of various kinds are unhappily crowding around you; fain would I discharge the office of a faithful friend and useful instructor, to caution you from the delusions of Pleasure, to preserve you in the paths of Virtue. And though

* See Ridley's "Choice of Hercules." Doddsley's Miscellanies, Vol. iii. p. 6. Shenstone's Works, Vol. i. p. 235. 3d Edit. and p. 106. foregoing.

perhaps, amidst the din and tumult of clamorous and importunate passions, the “ still small voice” of friendly admonition may not be always heard with sufficient attention ; yet, I am not without my hopes, that the truth, the reasonableness, the importance of what I urge, will have its due weight in a moment of reflection ; and avail, through God’s grace, to direct your choice so happily, that you will scorn the ruinous sophistry of false PLEASURE ; that you will pursue, with unremitted ardour and diligence, the call of Virtue ; which is, indeed, the call of public and of private felicity.

Can there be wanting any further arguments in proof hereof, than the certain assurance we have had from the last discourse, “ That the unrestrained indulgence to sensual Pleasures in general, and to those of Impurity in particular, is in direct opposition to the laws of Nature, of Reason, of Society, and of God ?” For surely it is the height of folly and presumption to suppose, that man shall ever be able to reap the fruits of happiness from

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that soil, which God and nature have accursed with barrenness, and ordained to bring forth only thorns and briars !

Indeed, the practice of Impurity never can, never did or will produce aught but thorns and briars : “ Mischiefs” and “ Miseries” to others, and to ourselves !—An additional argument to dissuade us from the practice ; and one upon which I am now to enlarge, not only in proof of the rectitude, wisdom, and propriety of those laws, human and divine, which prohibit this Vice ; but as an undeniable testimony, that they who pursue it are in truth, what Solomon has pronounced them, “ Men utterly void of understanding ;” men, who act in direct contradiction to the distinguishing principles and genuine characteristics of their nature ; giving themselves up to the service of Impurity, so injurious to others, so debasing and pernicious to themselves.

Were I reasoning of the Vice in general, or were not these Discourses, as intended for your benefit, particularly directed

to You, my young friends, there are a variety of instances (some of them just hinted in the former Sermons) wherein I should exemplify the injurious effects of this Vice upon society; wherein I should shew how prejudicial and offensive it is to many of the best and dearest interests of our fellow-creatures *. But, waving these, I would in the present case only appeal to your sensibility, to your ingenuity of heart.—Youth is the season of generous sensibility; and the heart commonly feels, and speaks aright, before it is made callous by a vicious intercourse with the men, and the things of the world. To that heart then, would I appeal in behalf “Of the partner of your guilt.” For, herein consists—and let it be noted well—one peculiar and aggravating circumstance of malignity in this Vice, “that the perpetration of it involves the ruin of two souls!” You cannot be singly guilty! While then you are expecting criminal pleasure from the object of your passion, Oh think that you are not

* See the former Sermon, p. 140. In a set of Sermons on Concupiscence, I have treated this subject at large: And perhaps they may hereafter appear before the public.

only endangering your own salvation, but, with strange perverseness, subjecting to the same fearful hazard that object also; and all for a momentary delight! Is this consistent with reason?—Is this agreeable to the genuine feelings of the human heart?

But, this object of your passion is either a poor Profligate of the town; an Innocent, seduced from Virtue by your deceit; or, the Wife of another. If the former, should she be, what many of these wretched ruined women become, a thorough profligate in heart and manners; should she be perfectly abandoned in principle, as in practice; Oh, my young friends, can you be so devoid of delicacy, and of feeling, as to hope for satisfaction from any commerce with an object like this: Who, having abjured all the peculiar and engaging excellencies of her sex, has nothing but rapine and plunder in view; and whose debauched and depraved mind is scarce less filthy and contagious than her miserably degraded and contaminated body?

But, if not one of these, if not thus depraved and utterly fallen, must not all the generous sentiments of your soul be affected, if haply you find amongst these daughters of distress, one, that still retains some traces of native honour and of innocence? One, in whose mind all the female grace is not utterly obliterated? One, who feels the misery of her state, and would rejoice if it were possible to extricate herself from the destructive Labyrinth? Must not her wretched case melt your bosom with commiseration?—Can your passions be so blind and so infatuated, as to expect gratification and delight from the arms of wretchedness and sorrow?—Can your passions be so cruel and injurious, as to wish to plunge this poor Unfortunate deeper and deeper in distress? You find her standing as it were on the fearful edge of a precipice, into which, if she plunges, the fall is inevitable perdition: And have you, can you have so little humanity, as not only to refuse your helping hand to guide her safely down from the danger; but even to lend that hand to

precipitate her into utter ruin * ! I appeal, my young friends, to your hearts ; and while you preserve those hearts ingenuous, it is, it must be impossible, that either the abandoned or the pitiable profligate should entice or engage you.

But, detesting connections with the very dregs of Vice and of wretchedness, you pursue another plan, and make Virtue and Innocence your prey ! Alas, my young friends, (I speak as a man, and as one conscious of all the infirmities of our nature) alas ! what a miserable pursuit, nay, and what a miserable triumph is this !—Not to enlarge upon the extreme malediction which the ruin of innocence brings upon our own souls, of the scandalous breaches of promise, the repeated perjuries, and all the base and abominable arts which seduction employs ; only reflect with yourselves what cruel injuries you are providing for the hapless object of your guilty passion ; whom, for the short and sordid indulgence of a sensual appetite, you are

* See my account of the Rise, &c. of the Magdalen Charity, with the Sermons annexed.

not only depriving of virtue and reputation, the brightest jewels in the female crown; but, probably introducing, when that unrelenting appetite is satiated, into a life big with the most ruinous and distressful evils! You are preparing tortures and punishments greater than the most brutal persecution can devise, for Her, whose greatest Fault perhaps, assuredly whose greatest Misfortune is, to have a heart most tenderly devoted to you! a heart, whose affection and attachment (with a barbarity unknown to Savages) you turn even to its own destruction, and are content to pierce with the severest anguish, can you but gratify your imperious and lustful desires! And is it possible—let reflection a moment stand still, and take a silent review,—is it possible that the soul can find repose and satisfaction, in the contemplation of a deed like this? Rather, the guilty remembrance will for ever haunt and harrow up the soul: The wretched object, reduced to all the complicated miseries of prostitution, will surely, like a spectre, for ever be present to, and murder all repose of the mind! while her ruined Innocence and Virtue, her polluted

body and defiled soul will continually plead, in the forum of conscience, “like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep damnation of the deed * !”

I dwell not, in this case, on the many accidental circumstances of distress which may, and do generally accompany it ; particularly, the distracting anguish of the parents, for the ruin of their beloved child : But I would here again, my young friends, appeal to the sensibility of your souls, and ask, whether it can be possible to reap from any gratification of sensual appetite, a sufficient reward for the remorse and the pangs of conscience, which must accompany the ruin of an Innocent ? of a virtuous and amiable fellow-creature ; whom, even if you do not abandon to all the miseries of prostitution, yet, despoiled of honour, blasted in character, you have shut out from the virtuous and social intercourse of her sex. You have relaxed her principles ; you have subjected her to the slow and pointing finger of infamy and

* See Dodwell, Vol. i. p. 243, &c.

scorn : You have made Her days bitter ;—nay, and most probably, have thus embittered all your own. For if the fatal connection prove burdensome and irksome to you, what miseries and uneasiness must attend its dissolution ! But if otherwise, what acute and piercing anxieties, what painful reflections will you endure, on having reduced so low, dishonoured so much, distressed in so tender and irreparable a manner, an object amiable in herself, and whom you find as truly deserving, as she is thoroughly possessed of your affection !

Thus, considered in every view, the seductions of Innocence can never be adequate to the end proposed : And highly injurious as it is, God almighty grant, my young friends, that you may for ever be preserved from its complicated guilt ! A guilt, which as it is without remedy, so must its remorse perpetually distract the mind ; and before we can be free from its pangs, we must either lull in stupefaction the voice of conscience, or in painful repentance mourn over the ruin we have wrought !

“ But, hating the stews, and an enemy to seduction, your object of vicious pursuit is the married woman, the wife of another.” Not, surely, because you think the crime of adultery less culpable than the former, less injurious to others, or more likely to answer your wishes ; for of all the crimes whereof man can be guilty, Adultery, in the esteem of every age and every place, has stood foremost ; as a crime most noxious to the interests of society, most pregnant with dire and destructive consequences ; and productive often of evils, even greater and more oppressive than Murder itself. Hence, not only the laws of God, but those of men, in almost every kingdom of the world, have adjudged in many cases death, and in all cases the severest penalties to it. But, I enlarge not on the guilt and atrociousness of this crime ; meaning, as in the former instances, to apply to your Hearts, my young friends, and to wish an answer from their sensibility, in testimony of the injury arising to others, and the little satisfaction to be expected for yourselves, from any adulterous connection !

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Can there be a more equitable rule, or one which more immediately approves itself to our judgment, than that golden one, "Of doing to others as we wish they should do unto us!" Put the case then, that you was an husband, rich in the affection of a wife very dear and very valuable to you; and that a cruel invader came, stole away the affection of that wife, and alienated her from her love and her duty. Can you have any conception of a greater injury, or a severer misfortune? Could you devise by any means more cruelly and horribly to torture and distress your neighbour? Nay, besides, the consequence will prove to distress even Her also, whom you have thus seduced from duty and from peace, and whose mind must never more expect to enjoy the sweet serenity flowing from conscious Virtue, and harmonious affections. Nor will Your mind be less injured, or your end more amply attained; for what confidence can you have in a woman drawn aside from the plainest path of duty, and who has broken through the most solemn, and the most sacred of all ties? What security can you have of her future Fidelity to you? And what unpleasing,

if not destructive consequences, may you not reasonably expect from the injured and indignant husband; for, “ Jealousy is the rage of a man; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance * !”

Thus it appears, that whatever mode of gratifying lustful passions men pursue, while they act in contradiction to the regular and appointed laws of Nature, of Society, and of God, they are, and ever must be, in a high degree injurious to their fellow-creatures, and particularly to the unhappy partners in their guilt !

Yet, not to others only, the Vice of Impurity is peculiarly noxious and prejudicial to ourselves, to the mind, body, estate and reputation. There cannot be any need to expatiate much upon this subject; for, who knows not how much this Vice degrades the human soul, how much it extinguishes the light of truth and virtue, and sensualizes every rational faculty? Who knows not what inquietude, dissatisfaction, and restless-

* Prov. vi. 34.

ness of mind ever dwell with those who practise it? Who knows not how much it distresses the conscience, while it keeps the sinner in perpetual anxiety, and in a constant, uneasy, feverish state of concupiscence? Who knows not how many and pernicious Vices it is necessarily connected with, or naturally leads to? Idleness, and the grossest intemperance are its never-failing attendants; pride and luxury dwell with it: Broils and contentions, nay, and often murder itself (murder of little hapless innocents, sometimes before, often after their birth) together with perjury, falsehood, lying, dissembling, and filthy conversation of all kinds accompany it: A total annihilation of social and domestick affection is too often fatally connected with it; Lust, predominant lust, frequently extinguishes the love of wife, of husband, of children, of friends, and of all things good and honourable: Nay, and, what one would least expect, it is no uncommon thing to see avarice in company with uncleanness: the lustful can often spare, and even deny almost necessities to their families and dependants; can wring

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from the poor, can filch from their neighbours, that they may have to lavish on the objects of their Vice, and maintain their expensive wickedness !

But, besides its connection with this odious and enormous train of evils, who knows not, what fatal mischiefs it brings upon the reputation ? Often utterly and irretrievably lost by it ; and with that loss, commonly, every other evil is involved ! Solomon, speaking of the impure man, remarks, that by his vicious pursuits, ‘ A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.’ Again, who knows not what immediate destruction this Vice often brings upon the estate, leading men to expences, which they are not able to answer ; for “ by means of an abandoned woman, says Solomon, a man is brought to a piece of bread ;” and thus, too often, God knows, excited to illicit methods of procuring that, whereby he may answer the demands of his lusts ; methods, which in numberless instances have proved the destruction of life : In the more exalted stations, by

gloomy suicide and desperation, and in the lower by a public and ignominious death! As but too many of those parents with bleeding hearts can testify, who have cause to date the ruin of their sons, and their shameful ends, from the fatal intercourse they have had with those, whose house 'is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death!'

Again, besides its sad effects on the mind, the reputation, the estate, and the life, who knows not with what horrid effects to the body this crime is attended? Evils, which God and nature have, as it were in just punishment, annexed to this flagrant transgression of their laws; evils, which frequently sap the foundation of the best constitutions; and, either in early youth consume the strength, and send the fading flowers devoted victims to the grave: or lay up a miserable store of disease and pain for the few and suffering days of future life;—and evils, which, however severe, it would be well if the Offenders only felt; but which, alas! are dreadfully communicated to the innocent and

virtuous; and for which, full often, late posterity may curse the sinful indulgences of their contaminated progenitors!

But, though these consequences are injurious and fatal enough, yet what are they, what are all earthly and corporeal punishments, compared to the anguish which arises from an uneasy and distressed conscience?—A conscience assured, that by a continuance in these vices all hopes of heaven are forfeited; that God and his blessed Son are armed in judgment against the sinner; and that every attribute, as well of power as of mercy, is not only offended, but engaged to punish and condemn? And oh, how dismal the close of life! how miserable old age, but above all, how shocking and tremendous the bed of death, to a conscience harrassed and oppressed like this!—But, of the death of the profligate, we shall hereafter have a fearful view, when we have considered the Vice of Gaming, another of the “False Pleasures” which men pursue, and one attended with consequences no less pernicious than the Vice of Impurity: With respect to which we observe, that how-

ever, in particular cases, station and fortune may enable men to avoid some of the evils before enumerated; yet these—the uneasy conscience—the offended God,—the future punishment—are consequences, no man upon earth can avoid, if he be guilty of this crime; which, as it totally precludes all the means of moral improvement, degrading and debasing the mind, so does it wholly incapacitate for all the duties of religion.

For, who will have the hardiness to pray to a God of purity, while openly transgressing his pure and holy laws? Who can read his word, which in every page flashes forth conviction and condemnation against all such offenders? Who in such a state can attend that holy Communion, which is the commemoration of a spotless Saviour, shedding his precious blood to redeem from all iniquity? And in what state must that soul be—Let those consider, who find it difficult enough to preserve the happy æquipoise even with the strictest care, and in the most regular use of the means of grace! Let such consider, in what state that soul must be,—which utterly neglectful of God, and of all the means of grace, lives in

the foul practice of a crime, injurious to others, ruinous to ourselves, in immediate contradiction to the laws of Nature, of Reason, of Society, and of that great and just Judge of all mankind, who hath declared, that he 'will render unto every man according to his works!'

I have surely said enough, my young friends! to engage not only your passions, but your reason, on the side of Purity; and to make you more than ordinarily watchful, that you fall not into the delusions and deceits of the opposite Vice. Indeed, all your vigilance and attention will be necessary, not only to combat its strong temptations from without, but its violent propensities from within. For, as there is no Vice perhaps to which our corrupt nature is more prone, so is there none which hath wrought greater ruin and distress amongst our fellow-creatures: "It hath cast down many mighty; yea, many strong men have been destroyed by it:"—Many (otherwise amiable and excellent) have, through its fatal seduction, not only sunk their reputation, but involved their whole succeeding lives in

the severest and most afflicting calamities*; an additional motive for caution and watchfulness, my young friends, with respect to yourselves:—But surely, at the same time, my beloved, a motive, as strong on your parts, who, as Parents or Guardians, are interested in the welfare of youth, not to treat with too harsh severity accidental transgression in this kind. Consider human nature, consider yourselves; consider the strength and violence of human passions, and the force of temptations; and with a lenient mildness reprove and exhort, in order to guard and preserve from future deviations as much as you may. But do not, by an ill-timed austerity, drive the offender to extremes, which a judicious and affectionate treatment may probably prevent.

While conscious of the weakness of our common nature, I would thus urge one word in behalf of mutual forbearance, and christian lenity one towards another; while I would wish to plead, frail and erring as we all are, for a little charity towards the frailties and errors of each other; mistake me not, my young friends, as if I was either apologiz-

* See the Anecdotes.

ing for those transgressions, or thought them by any means unavoidable, and therefore to be excused. I am well assured—for we have had sufficient examples—that no necessity of sinning in this respect is laid upon our nature: Christ hath promised blessedness to the pure in heart, and pure in heart we may therefore certainly be. And though I would by no means treat accidental offence with severity, yet, believe me, (my young friends) you will find it not only infinitely more happy, but more easy to yourselves, to persevere perfectly unblameable, and pure from this Vice, than, having once broken the bounds of chastity, to return again within them. Truth it is, through the grace of Jesus Christ, the grossest offenders may, on sincere repentance, find mercy and pardon: We have upon record, for the comfort of all those who have deviated from purity, examples of abundant mercy and forgiveness vouchsafed by the God of our hope, to the greatest sinners in this way; and it would ill become me more especially, to speak with severity on this head, who have been so far blest by the goodness of God, as to be instrumental in opening a house of

mercy for, and in preaching continually the benign and comfortable doctrines of pardon and peace to those who truly repent, and utterly forsake the Impurities of their former life *.—Yet this, notwithstanding, I must be allowed to repeat, and urge in the strongest manner, that as it is far more easy to prevent, than to cure, so is it far more eligible and happy : And on this account, ever solicitous for your best welfare, my young friends, and fully ascertained that by due care and discipline, a strict and inviolable chastity may be maintained, (till it shall please God to grant you the full completion of your just and reasonable desires in honourable marriage) Allow me in conclusion, just to suggest a few particulars, which, under the all-sufficient grace of God, will certainly enable you the better to combat, and to conquer.

To this end, the most important rule is, ever to maintain the most lively sense of religion on your souls ; and particularly, a constant regard to the presence and all-seeing eye of the pure and holy God ; a tender re-

* See the Note, p. 155.

membrance of the death and crucifixion of your Redeemer for the sinful pollutions of our nature; of your union with Him, of the inhabitation of his Holy Spirit in your bodies as his temples; the many and striking passages in his holy word, declarative of his hatred to this Vice, and of the certain punishment it will find, when the whoremonger, and adulterer, and all the unclean and defiled, shall be not only excluded from heaven, but cast into the lake, the smoke of whose torment ascendeth for ever and ever!

A lively sense of religion upon the soul, is scarce to be maintained without a regular and constant use of the means of grace; you will therefore be fervent and frequent in prayer; diligent in reading the sacred scriptures, and uniform in your attendance on the holy table of the Lord; which, you will find, from the necessary previous preparation, from the solemnity of the act, from the cautious sobriety of future conduct, and above all, from the plenteous supply of divine grace, of all the means most powerful to preserve you pure in heart and life!

To these religious means, the great moral ones, of strict and universal sobriety, of constant and industrious employment, and of an habitual watchfulness and government over the outward senses, must necessarily be joined: The eye or ear must never be suffered, much less be habituated, to see or hear any thing, which may be contrary to the laws of Virtue, or tend to weaken its sacred and reverential restraints. You cannot preserve too cautiously that native modesty, which is, if not corrupted, congenial with us; and a strong barrier against Vice: particularly, if it be aided by an improved delicacy of sentiment, a refinement of taste and manners, which will always render gross Vice so unpleasing and painful, that we shall never suffer it to gain the ascendancy over us.

But temperance, industry, self-government, and the like, will be fruitless, and every rule and every caution frustrated, if you do not take especial heed, to avoid all those persons, places, and occasions of temptation, which are either calculated to seduce, or in your

case likely to seduce and destroy your Virtue. Wherever but a probability of so unhappy an effect may appear, it is your immediate duty, and your highest wisdom to retire: Your greatest safety is in retreat; and your greatest danger consists in parlying with temptations. Fly them with precipitation, cautious and fearful of beginnings; and making it your study to avoid, as much as may be, all the occasions of evil. The cockatrice which may easily be crushed in the egg, will, if suffered to hatch and grow up, prove a poisonous serpent, hard to be destroyed.

Besides these Rules, your own prudence and discretion will suggest more, and such as are immediately adapted to your peculiar state and circumstances. The discourses too, which I have delivered to you heretofore, will suggest some others, and those of no small importance: And, if you conduct yourselves by these, and rules like these, there is no doubt, my young friends, but you will escape the contagion of youthful lusts, and keep yourselves pure.

Happy shall I think myself, if any endeavours of mine shall conduce to this most important end; and let me intreat you most seriously and affectionately, to consider, that as no motive, but an earnest wish for your present and eternal well-being, can influence my heart in what I deliver to you; so you can never acquit yourselves to your own consciences, if you neglect and despise what I offer. Nay more,—if you neglect and despise it, and act in contrariety to what I have advised, you never can be happy in this life, or happy in the next. For, take it, my young friends, as a closing truth on this occasion; “Purity and virtue are their own rewards;” and, were there neither a God, nor a future state, they would be the surest means of rendering us happy in ourselves, useful and honourable to the community, and a blessing to all those most nearly and tenderly interested in our welfare!—But, when there is a God, when there is a future state, the blessedness of which we can never share without this purity and holiness of heart and life; how are our obligations of duty and of interest height-

ened ! and how can we expect to escape condemnation, if we neglect to cultivate and improve it !

God almighty grant, that you, and all of us, may labour so to purify our souls from all defilement, to act in such consistence with the laws of Nature, of Reason, of Society, and of God ; to be so cautious of injuring our neighbour in the slightest, much more in the most atrocious degree ; and to maintain such self-reverence, such a wise and constant regard to the dignity and purity of our nature ; that we may pass through this world in peace, and with the pleasing testimony of a good conscience, and be ready to receive our call to the next, with an humble but firm persuasion, that we shall see and enjoy the beatifick vision of that God, in whose presence is the fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore ! Amen.

ANECDOTES on the foregoing subject.

(1.) It has been remarked of Augustus Cæsar, that chastity was by no means his Virtue; but if he cast his eye on a beautiful woman, though her husband were of the first quality in Rome, he would immediately send his officers to bring her to him, either by fair means or by force. The Philosopher Athenodorus, who had formerly been preceptor to Tiberius, and was very intimate with Augustus, took the following method to reform this Vice of the great man. For, when the Emperor one day had sent a litter for a certain noble lady, of the house of the Camilli, the Philosopher, fearing some disaster might ensue, (her family being very popular, and highly respected at Rome) went before to the lady's palace; and acquainting the parties concerned with it, the husband boiling with rage, threatened to stab the messengers of the Emperor, when they came. The prudent Philosopher however appeased his resentment, and only desired a suit of the lady's apparel, which was granted him. He

then put it on, and hiding his sword under his robes, entered the litter, personating the lady. The messenger knew no other, and carried him instantly to the Emperor's apartment; who, heightened with desire, made haste to open the litter himself: When Athenodorus, suddenly drawing his sword, leaped forth upon him; saying, "Thus, mightest thou have been murdered. Wilt thou never leave a Vice, attended so evidently with much danger? Jealousy and rage might have armed an husband, or substituted an assassin thus disguised, instead of thy faithful friend; who might have laid hold of this opportunity to deprive the Republic of so gracious a Prince.—But I have taken care of thy life; do Thou henceforth take warning." The Emperor, equally frightened and surprised, testified himself pleased with the Philosopher's stratagem; gave him ten talents of gold, thanking him for so seasonable a correction; and it is said that from that time he began to restrain his unlawful pleasures, and cultivate a life more decent, and suitable to his exalted character.

(2.) A young Italian Nobleman fell in love with a Dutchess of singular beauty, but knew not how to make her sensible of it; at length chance gave him an opportunity beyond his expectation. One evening as he returned from Hawking, he passed through the fields of the lady in question, bordering on the palace. The Duke her husband and she were walking together as the young Lord came by. The Duke seeing his train, and what game they had been pursuing, asked him some questions concerning their sport, and being of an hospitable disposition, invited him into his palace to partake of a collation. He accepted the offer; and here commenced an acquaintance, which in time made way for an assignation between the Dutchess and him. Accordingly he was let into the gardens one night, and conducted privately to her chamber, where she was before-hand ready to receive him. After some compliments, "My Lord, said the Dutchess, you are obliged to my husband for this favour; who, as soon as you were gone from our house, the first time we saw you, gave you such commendations as

made me conceive an immediate passion for you.”—“And is it true, Madam?” replied the young Nobleman in astonishment; “then far be it from me to be so ungrateful to my friend.” With that he resumed his garments which he had begun to throw by, and instantly took his leave.

(3.) When a young fellow, who was just come from the play of Cleomenes, or the Spartan Hero, told Mr. Dryden the author, in raillery against the continency of his principal character, “If I had been alone with a lady, I should not have passed my time like your Spartan :”—“That may be, answered the bard with a very grave face; but, give me leave to tell you, Sir, you are no hero.”

(4.) But of all the instances we can meet with in reading or in life, where shall we find one so generous and honest, so noble and divine, as that of Joseph in holy writ? When his master had entrusted him so unreservedly, that (to speak in the emphatical manner of the scripture) “He knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat,” the amiable

youth was so unhappy as to appear irresistably beautiful to his Mistress: But when this shameless woman proceeds to solicit him, how gallant, how glorious is his answer! "Behold, my Master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand: There is none greater in this house than I, neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, because thou art his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" The same arguments which a base mind would have made to itself for perpetrating the evil; namely, free trust, full power, and immediate temptation, were to this brave, this gallant man, the greatest motives for his forbearing it. He could do it with Impunity from man; but he could not affront and presumptuously offend a just, an holy, and an avenging God.

(5.) When men of rank and figure pass away their lives in criminal pursuits and practices; in perpetually seeking the ruin of Innocence, and distress of unguarded Virtue; they ought to consider, that thereby they

render themselves far more vile and despicable than any innocent man can be, however low his birth, his station, or his fortunes. Title and ancestry render a good man more illustrious, but an ill one more contemptible ;

Thy-father's merit sets thee up to view,
And plants thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy Virtues or thy Faults conspicuous,
CATO.

It is surely matter of wonder that these destroyers of Innocence, though dead to all the higher sentiments of Virtue and Honour, are not restrained by Compassion and Humanity. To bring sorrow, confusion and infamy into a family ; to wound the heart of a tender parent, and stain the life of a poor deluded young woman with a dishonour which can never be wiped off, are circumstances, one would think, sufficient to check the most violent passion, in a heart which has the least tincture of pity and good-nature. To enforce these general reflections, we add the following Anecdote, taken from a French author, and which refers to the Chevalier Bayard ; a man of great valour, high reputation, and distin-

guished amongst his cotemporaries by the appellation of "The Knight without fear, and without reproach." Our Knight, says he, was pretty much addicted to that most fashionable of all faults. One morning as he was dressing, he ordered his Lacquey to bring him home in the evening some other victim of lawless passion. The fellow, wise and prompt to do evil, had, it seems, for some time addressed himself to an old gentlewoman of decayed fortune, who had a young maiden to her daughter, of very great beauty, and not yet sixteen years of age. The mother's extreme poverty, and the insinuations of this artful pander concerning the soft disposition and generosity of his master, made her at length consent to deliver up her daughter. But many were the intreaties and representations of the mother, to gain her child's consent to an action, which she said she abhorred, even while she exhorted her to it: "But, my child, says she, can you see your mother die for hunger?" The virgin argued no longer, but bursting into tears, declared she would go any where. The Lacquey conveyed her with great obsequiousness and secrecy to his

master's lodgings, and placed her in a commodious apartment till he came home. The Knight, at his return, was met by his Lacquey, (with that saucy familiarity, which Vice never fails to inspire between ranks however unequal) who told him with a diabolical exultation, "She is as handsome as an angel, but the fool has wept, till her eyes are swelled and bloated; for she is a maiden and a gentlewoman." With that he conducted his master to the room where she was, and retired. The Knight, when he saw her bathed in tears, said in some surprize; "Don't you know, young woman, why you were brought hither?"—The unhappy maid instantly fell on her knees, and with many interruptions of sighs and tears said to him, "Yes, Sir, too well, alas! I know why I am brought hither: My mother, to get bread for her and myself has sent me: But would it might please Heaven I could die, before I am added to the number of those miserable wretches who live without honour!" With this reflection, she wept anew, and beat her bosom. The Knight stepping from her, said, "I am not so abandoned, as to hurt your innocence

againſt your will.”—The novelty of the accident ſurprized him into Virtue, and covering the young maid with a cloke, he led her to a relation’s houſe, to whoſe care he recommended her for that night. The next morning he ſent for her mother, and asked her if her daughter was the virtuous creature ſhe ſo amiably appeared to be; the mother affirmed him of her ſpotleſs purity, till at leaſt the late period, when ſhe delivered her up to his ſervant. “ And are not you then, cried the Knight, a wicked woman, to contrive the debauchery of your own child?” She held down her face with fear and ſhame, and in her confuſion uttered ſome broken words concerning her poverty. “ Far be it, ſaid the Chevalier, that you ſhould relieve yourſelf from want by a much greater evil! Your daughter is a fine young creature: Do you know of none that ever ſpoke of her for a wife?” The mother answered, “ There is an honeſt man in our neighbourhood that loves her, who has often ſaid he would marry her with 200 l.” The Knight ordered his man to reckon out that ſum, with an addition of fifty to buy the bride

clothes, and fifty more as an help to the mother. I appeal to all the Libertines in town, whether the possession of mercenary beauty could give half the pleasure that this young gentleman enjoyed, in the reflection of having relieved a miserable parent from guilt and poverty, an innocent virgin from public shame and ruin, and bestowing a virtuous wife upon an honest man *.—How noble an example is this to every generous mind, and how consonant to the character of that “pure religion,” which we are told “consists in visiting the fatherless and the widows in their afflictions, and in keeping ourselves unspotted from the world!”

(6.) A Lacedæmonian, whose affairs obliged him to go out of Greece, fell into some company, who were very inquisitive about the constitution of Sparta. One of them, among other particulars, desired to know what was the punishment for Adulterers? The Spartan readily replied, That they had no Adulterers in Lacedæmon: But upon the Querist

* For some fine remarks suited to the subject, see the Guardian, No. 17.

persisting to know in what manner he believed an Adulterer would be punished, who should happen to be detected, "I believe (says the Spartan) our Senate would order the criminal to give the person he injured a Bull, with a neck long enough to stand upon the continent of Greece, and drink out of a river in Peloponnesus." Upon the inquisitive Gentleman's seeming to apprehend, that it was absolutely impossible to find such a Bull, "Sir, (says the Spartan) give me leave to tell you, that it is full as impossible to find an Adulterer in Lacedæmon."

(7.) Henry the IVth of France was unquestionably one of the greatest characters ancient or modern which history produces; whether we consider the qualities of his body or mind, yet an attachment to women, and an insatiable indulgence of his passions, not only led him into a thousand actions, which tarnished his glory, but intirely marred all the peace of his life. It would be endless to quote instances. The admirable memoirs of his great friend and minister Sully, are full of them; they are indeed one continued admo-

nition to the reflecting mind against the Vices of Impurity ; and nothing can be more melancholy than to think, that a man, whose humanity, generosity and courage were unequalled ; who, in the words of Sully, “ loved his subjects as a father, and the whole state, as the head of a family ;” who was candid, sincere, grateful, compassionate, generous, wise, penetrating ; and in short, endowed with every great and amiable quality, should be so attached to women and to lust, as to render himself despicable, his wife and family miserable, and as it seems most probable, his latter end horribly fearful *.

(8.) The learned Selden, some few days before his death, sent for Archbishop Usher and Dr. Langbraine. Amongst other matters he told them, that he had surveyed most of the learning that was amongst the sons of men ; that his study was filled with books and manuscripts, on various subjects ; yet he could not at that time recollect any passage

* He was stabbed in his coach by Ravaillac, who, as there were strong reasons to suspect, was instigated to the horrid deed by one of the King's mistresses.

out of infinite books and papers whereon he could rest his soul, save out of the sacred scriptures; wherein the most remarkable passage which lay most upon his spirits, was this. "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." See Titus ii. ver. 11—14.

(9.) The story which is told of the foundation of the Monastery of La Trappe, is remarkable and well attested: The Order is one of the most austere and self-denying imaginable. Its founder was M. Bouthillier de Rance, a man of pleasure and gallantry, who was converted into the deepest gloom of devotion by the following shocking incident. His affairs had obliged him to absent himself for some time from a lady, with whom

he had lived in the connections of unbridled and successful passion. At his return to Paris, he purposed to surprize her agreeably, and at the same time to satisfy his own impatient desire of seeing her, by going directly and without ceremony to her apartment, by a back stair, with which he was but too well acquainted. But, think of the spectacle which presented itself to him on his entrance into the chamber!—his mistress dead! dead of the small-pox! disfigured beyond expression! a loathsome mass of putrefied matter; and the surgeon standing by, separating the head from the body, because the coffin had been made too short!—He stood for a moment motionless in amazement, and filled with horror; then retired from the world, and shut himself up in the Convent of La Trappe; where he passed the sad residue of his days, in the most cruelly severe and disconsolate devotion.

(10.) We will close these anecdotes with a part of a letter inserted in the Guardian (No. 123.) written in the character of a mother to one in high rank, who had seduced

and abused her daughter, and which gives a very lively idea of the affliction which a good parent must suffer on so melancholy an occasion.

“ My Lord,

Last night I discovered the injury you have done to my daughter. Heaven knows how long and piercing a torment that short-lived shameful Pleasure of yours must bring upon me! upon me, from whom You never received any offence! This consideration alone should have deterred a noble mind from so base and ungenerous an act. But alas! what is all the grief that must be My share, in comparison of that, with which you have requited Her, by whom you have been obliged? Loss of good name, anguish of heart, shame and infamy, must inevitably fall upon her, unless she gets over them by what is much worse, open impudence, professed lewdness, and abandoned prostitution! These are the returns you have made to her, for putting in your power all her livelihood and dependance, her Virtue and Reputation. O my Lord, should My son have practised the like on one of Your daughters!—I know

you swell with indignation at the very mention of it, and would think he deserved a thousand deaths, should he make such an attempt upon the honour of your family. 'Tis well, my Lord :—And is then the honour of your daughter (whom still, though it had been violated, you might have maintained in plenty, and even luxury) of greater moment to her, than to my daughter hers, whose only sustenance it was? And must my son, void of all the advantages of a generous education, must He, I say, consider; and may your Lordship be excused from all reflection? —Eternal contumely attend that guilty Title, which claims exemption from thought, and arrogates to its wearer the prerogative of brutes! Ever cursed be its false lustre, which could dazzle my poor daughter to her undoing! Was it for this, that the exalted merits and godlike Virtues of your great ancestor were honoured with a coronet, that it might be a pander to his posterity, and confer a privilege of dishonouring the innocent and defenceless? At this rate, the laws of rewards should be inverted, and he who is generous and good should be made a beggar and a

slave ; that industry and honest diligence may keep his posterity unspotted, and preserve them from ruining virgins, and making whole families unhappy. Wretchedness is now become my never-failing portion, &c.—Thus have I given some vent to my sorrow, nor fear I to awaken you to repentance, so that your sin may be forgiven.

My Lord,

“Your Conscience will help you to my Name.”

S E R M O N XII.

P A R T I.

On Intemperance.

I CORINTHIANS ix. 25.

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

YOUR enemies from without, my young friends, are not the only ones you have to dread : You carry those within, from which far the greatest danger is to be suspected, and against which, consequently, the strictest guard is to be kept. Every thing is to be feared from a corrupt nature, continually prompting strong and evil passions to illicit gratifications. If, by divine grace, you can maintain the due government over these ; if you can support reason in her empire, and preserve to the soul its due dominion over the body ; you will more easily persevere in a course of Virtue ; you will more easily resist the outward seductions of the world and the devil. In this government of the passions ;

by maintaining this superiority of the soul over the body, you will conquer that despicable and destructive Vice of **INTEMPERANCE**, the next of those “**Falſe Pleaſures**,” which I am to develope ; and which will be beſt done by ſtating at large the nature of the contrary Virtue, ſo eſſentially neceſſary to your right conduct, ſo immediately productive of your true felicity. For, if you “**ſtrive for the maſtery**,” if you wiſh to attain the great end of life ; if you wiſh to depart hence with ſelf-applauſe, and to obtain the future crown, you muſt “**be TEMPERATE in all things*** ;” carefully abſtaining from the improper uſe of every thing which tends to diminifh or deſtroy the due government of yourſelf, and to weaken that dominion over your paſſions, which every wiſe man ſhould endeavour to maintain.

This is the general notion of Temperance : But it may be proper to ſhew more largely, wherein Temperance is more eſpecially placed: what are the particulars wherein it is generally tranſgreſſed ; what are the bad conſequences of ſuch tranſgreſſion ; and what are

* *Εὐκρατὴς.*

the proper rules to be observed in order to avoid such transgression.

Now, as TEMPERANCE in general consists, “in maintaining the dominion of reason over sense, of soul over body;” so is it particularly conversant in regulating and duly proportioning the measure of sleep, food, meat and drink, and the other corporeal and merely animal gratifications*. With respect to the measure of these, it is not easy, indeed it is not possible, to lay down any certain and universal rule; since men’s constitutions differ so much from each other, and from themselves at different times, that what would be excess in one, might perhaps be abstinence in another; and what would be abstinence in one, might be excess in another. But though this be the case, there are criterions enough whereby you may be enabled to judge sufficiently in your own case, and to determine clearly concerning the degree of excess or defect in any of the above particulars.

* ——— Γαργος, υπνός, λαγνεία, &c.
Καὶ Θυμῶν.—See the golden Verses of Pythagoras.

In the first place, a general reflection on the end for which these bodily gratifications are designed, will serve as an invariable rule to direct your conduct : When you consider that they are designed only to support and refresh the body, to keep it in due tone and harmony, that it may properly obey the commands of the soul, and as a faithful servant, well discharge those offices which reason enjoins ; you will easily see that every excess, incapacitating for this end, and destroying this regular subordination, is wrong and criminal. But when you consider more particularly the things, above specified, whereby temperance is exceeded, you will more easily judge concerning that proportion of each which you are to allow yourself.

And first with respect to Sleep ; when you reflect that it is an immediate demand of animal nature, absolutely necessary, it is true, to the support of that nature, but at the same time reducing it to a state of perfect inactivity, to an intire deprivation of all the functions of reason, the lowest of all animal gratifications,

and one which absolutely strikes out from the short span of our life, all the moments which are consumed in it; when you consider Sleep in this true light, you will never indulge to it more than you find necessary from your constitution, to the support and refreshment of your body.

As the time of youth is the only time for improvement, every precious hour of this short period should be husbanded with the most sacred care. But how many of those precious hours will you lose, if, indulging to this mean gratification, you waste the early and most important part of the day in indolence and slumber, nor rise on the first occasion to apply with renewed vigour of mind to those studies or occupations which you have in pursuit? Be assured, you will find, my young friends, that Early rising is one of the surest methods to improve your Minds, your Virtue, and your Health: Your Minds; as in those prime hours of silence and retirement, you will not only forestall the business of the day; but, gaining many hours, which others indolently consume in bed, will be

enabled to lay up a treasure of knowledge for your future lives:—Your Virtue; as the animal powers will thus be weakened; as from increase of knowledge, increase of goodness will naturally spring; and as the grace of heaven will certainly fall upon, and bless your well-meant endeavours, as well as hear those petitions which I suppose you, my dear young friends, to put up to him in the stillness of the morning, before you enter on any worldly occupations: A practice, which, I trust, you will never omit; for, believe me, that practice will be found in a wonderful manner to bless and succeed your undertakings, and to render your minds serene and cheerful through the following day. Nor will early rising be found less conducive to your Health: It is with sleep as with all other animal enjoyments; where one is hurt by taking too little, thousands are hurt by taking too much: where one man is hurt by abstinence, thousands are slain by excess. A much less quantity of sleep than is generally supposed, suffices to support and refresh nature; and the taking too much of this, as in the case of food, not only overloads the body,

but of consequence hebetates and flattens the mind; and renders a man, if I may so say, half asleep all the time he is awake. Take a moderate proportion sufficient to your refreshment, and you will rise chearful, vigorous, and alive; alert and active, fit for business, and well inclined to it. 'Tis unquestionable in this, as in all other bodily gratifications, that the more we indulge it, the more we may; that it gains a dominion over us, in proportion to the power we give it; 'till at length, if we are so wretched as to submit ourselves to such a drowzy master, it will not only rule over us for the night, but bury us in its oblivious infatuation great part of the day. Hence that vacancy and stupor, discernible in some, especially after full feeding; that luxurious indulgence in sleep after such meals;—a practice as prejudicial to health, as it is contrary to temperance; the consequence, certainly, of ill custom and downright indolence, which can have nothing to plead or urge in its defence. Beware, my young friends, of ill customs, not of this only, but of every kind; they creep upon us insidiously by slow degrees; and having once gained a

power over us, are with the extremest difficulty broken and conquered. Make it your rule therefore, with respect to sleep, to indulge to it no more than is absolutely requisite for your support and refreshment: Consider, while you give way to the stealing softness, the Thief of your time and pleasure, you sacrifice both the duties and enjoyments of your being. Make it your fixed practice to rise early in the morning, and when arisen, to employ yourself actively and industriously; to be awake and alive; not drowzy and indolent throughout the day: Always remembering that this is the way to the greatest improvements and advantages; while the sluggard, who cries, "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep," shall be clothed with rags: His poverty shall come upon him as one that travelleth, his want as an armed man.

It is with Virtues as with Vices; as one Vice generally brings on, and leads to another, so the right discharge of one Virtue capacitates for, and introduces the practice of another. He who is moderate in his use

of "Sleep," will certainly be so in his use of "Food;" because excess in the latter will render it impossible to be abstemious in the former.

The great and good Creator of the world, who has given us an infinite variety of meats and drinks, to support our frail bodies, has been pleased to annex to the use of those meats and drinks a certain degree of satisfaction: What is necessary to our support, he has rendered pleasing in the use; from whence we are evidently taught, that we may certainly consult a degree of satisfaction in our food, and are not bound by the laws of strictest Temperance to deny ourselves all kinds of gratification in it. But though this be the case, Temperance by all means enjoins the strictest watchfulness, lest we exceed this allowed satisfaction: Continually reminding us of the great and chief end for which we are called to eat and drink; namely, the support and refreshment of our body, in order to maintain the just dominion of our souls. Whenever we eat or drink more than is sufficient to this end,—to the heating our bodies,

the endangering our health, the inflaming our passions, and the losing the strict and sober government of ourselves ; let the quantity be what it may, more or less, we then are guilty of the Vice of INTEMPERANCE. A Vice, my young friends, which you are peculiarly to avoid : The very slightest indulgences in it are dangerous ; the least temptations to it are cautiously to be guarded against : For it is most destructive ; pregnant with the direst consequences to health, fortune, reputation, purity, peace, and felicity of every kind.

Need you be told how prejudicial it is to Health, when you reflect that almost all the diseases, or at least those of the most dangerous and painful kind, which afflict the human race, arise from Intemperance ; either our own, or that of our parents entailed upon us ? See in the horrid train of this pernicious monster, burning Fever, joint-torturing Gout, half-dead Palsy, swollen Dropsy, panting Asthma, full-gorged Apoplexy, and a thousand other disorders of fearful name ! Disorders, sufficient to render the least approach

to Intemperance formidable ; sufficient to recommend the contrary Virtue : Whose perpetual attendants are self-possession, chearfulness and health ; which, for the most part, extends life to the longest span ; but which, if life (amidst the thousand and ten thousand evils that surround it) cannot be extended to the longest span, yet enables men truly to enjoy life while they exist, and preserves them from its greatest evils. 'Tis however remarkable, and a great argument on the side of Temperance, that those who have most excelled in this Virtue, have generally attained the greatest age ; and we are told of Socrates, as a further argument for temperance, that notwithstanding he resided in Athens, during the great and devouring plague there, yet he never caught the least infection : An event unanimously ascribed to that uninterrupted Temperance for which he was remarkable.

Again, how fatal are the effects of Intemperance to men's Fortunes ! They who are slaves to this Vice, not only give the knavish and the crafty the most dangerous advantages over them in their temporal affairs, but are abso-

lutely incapacitated from a right management of those affairs. Too often, indeed, they grow wholly neglectful of them; little regarding any thing beside, if they can dissipate their hours in the wretched company of those who are trifling, worthless, and inconsiderate as themselves: while thus their unhappy families are suffered to languish in poverty and distress, and are often with them brought to the lowest misery. “For the drunkard and the glutton, says the wise man, shall come to poverty.”

What a brand too doth this vice fix upon the Reputation! Have you not, my young friends, the utmost abhorrence of a man, whose known character is that of a glutton or a drunkard? A character like this must necessarily be despised: For who will, who can repose any confidence in such persons, especially where secrecy is concerned? Who knows not that they who are guilty of this Vice are disposed to various crimes, and preparing for the greatest; for when men's reason is lost, of what are they not capable? Who knows not, that they who practise the

vilest crimes, robbers, murtherers, and other such public offenders, generally heat and prepare themselves by excess of drinking, for the perpetration of their guilt? finding it often necessary to make themselves mad, before they can have hardiness to commit their flagitious enormities; To a fellowship wherein the unwary are but too frequently drawn, by a fellowship with them in their intemperate drinkings and excess. But further, where persons are not led to such gross evils, who knows not how despicable men become by this Vice, in the sight of all sober people? who knows not what a wretched and contemptible figure they make, with stupid staring eyes, and muddled countenance; so contemptible, that could a drunkard once see himself in that situation, he could not fail, one would imagine, to despise himself, and to avoid as a scorpion the excess which so disguises, degrades, destroys all the Rational in him? Could he too, at the same time, hear the absurd, the weak, the offensive, the lewd, the immoral and profane follies which fall from his stammering tongue, he would forswear a Vice, which, beyond all others, unmans and exposes to scorn. The Spartans,

my young friends, sensible of the numberless evils which spring from Intemperance, used to inculcate sobriety on their Children, by exposing to their notice the behaviour of their Slaves in a drunken fit; frequently making them eye-witnesses of all their madness, and absurdities, and at length, of the perfect senselessness which the immoderate draught occasioned; not doubting but the idea of the vile change, would be so fixed in the minds of its beholders, as to render them utterly averse from its cause: And we may reasonably conclude that from hence, from the frequency of so sad and humiliating a sight, the children of those persons, who have been accustomed thus to disguise themselves, have often proved remarkably sober: Avoiding in their riper years their parents' crime, from that utter detestation of it which they contracted in their earlier years. Would to God, my young friends, You may always thus draw good from evil! Would to God, whenever you behold this, or any other deformed appearance of Vice, you may be struck with abhorrence at the sight, and engaged to a nearer and more affectionate love of Virtue!

But I have not done with the ill consequences of the Vice of Intemperance: It is the parent of lust, as well as the murderer of reason. For who can doubt of the worst sensual gratifications following it with those, whose passions are all on fire, and whose reason lies buried in the profoundest oblivion? And can that be a man, a rational, an immortal creature; much more, can that be a Christian, who thus knowingly drowns all that is right and good in his soul, and voluntarily unbars the gates to admit his worst and most destructive enemies?—But on this head we shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter.

Let me observe again, that not only the health, the fortune, the reputation, the Chastity, but all the Peace of that man's mind must necessarily be destroyed, who is a slave to this Vice. Even in the most jovial hours, contentions and quarrels are apt to arise; “For, who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath contentions, who hath babblings, who hath wounds without cause, who hath redness of eyes?—They that tarry long

at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine*.”—But these are not their only woes; for what can be more pitiable than a man given up to the severity of his own reproaches on account of his excesses, and of the evil Consequences which he cannot help fearing from them? What peace of mind can such a man enjoy?—And, worn out with Intemperance and disease, incapable any longer to relish the boon companion and the circling glass; deserted by his summer friends; unsupported by any inward consolation; how peevish, how pitiable, how deplorably wretched must be the decline of such a man’s life!

Yet neither is this the worst; for all who are unhappily connected with such a one, must in a measure also feel his evils, and be deprived of peace. Who can paint in colours sufficiently affecting, the distressful situation of the tender wife, and the affectionate family? The afflicted wife, waiting with anxious sorrow, and a thousand reasonable and foreboding apprehensions, the return of an husband, deformed with Intemperance, and bringing to his home,—not the chearful endear-

* Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.

ments of the father,—the husband—the companion—the friend; but the foul, the litigious, or the stupid debasement of the brute! Oh shame to human nature, to Virtue, to tenderness and love! And is it thus men destroy the sweetness of domestic felicity, and drive themselves from the enjoyment of that best earthly paradise, their home? Oh, my young friends, when I consider you, as rising into life; when I contemplate those who now are interested in your good conduct; those who will hereafter be connected with you by the tenderest and most endearing ties, and who, with sweet affection, will depend on you for the best and choicest comforts of human life; How I tremble, lest the seductions of false pleasure should allure and ensnare you! lest you should forfeit the expectations formed of you! lest, cruel to yourselves, as well as unkind to others, you should blast the fair prospects of felicity, which Innocence and Virtue present to your view!

But do not so, my young friends! Recollect, that with the happiness of others your own is involved; that if you deviate from

the chearful, comfortable paths of Temperance, you cannot suffer alone; your Vices will become the affliction of others, and of those perhaps most dear to you. Let therefore, to the call of private happiness, that of social also be united; and with these, let the voice of religion join, to dissuade you from the least approaches to Intemperance; which, beside all the destructive consequences we have just enumerated, is attended with this further ill consequence, that it totally incapacitates for all the duties, and renders a man's whole life and spirit totally inconsistent with the life and spirit, of the religion of Jesus. That religion "teacheth us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts; to live soberly; to take heed that we be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness;" and in short, lays its professors under the most indispensable obligations to preserve an absolute dominion of the soul over the body, and to prepare themselves by strict temperance, and purity of heart and life, for that kingdom, where eating and drinking will no longer be necessary to our existence; but where, freed from the incumbrance of these mortal ta-

bernacles, we shall be as the angels of God.

But of our Obligations to this duty, with such Rules as may be useful to preserve us in the practice of it, we will speak in the next:—Rules, which, I cannot doubt, will be acceptable to you, my young friends, and carefully observed by you. For, though I am earnestly desirous to shew you your duty in every particular, to point out the dangers you have to encounter, and to paint in the strongest colours the deformity of those Vices, which are most likely to beset, and to prove destructive to you; yet I cannot persuade myself that there can be any thing in the beastly detestable practices I have attempted to expose, any allurements or temptation in the mere indulgence of an animal palate, sufficient to counterbalance the loss of all those mighty pleasures, which sobriety, temperance, and constant possession of the mind afford; sufficient to counterbalance the loss of Reason, the loss of Health, the loss of Fortune, the loss of peace and serenity of Conscience, the loss of domestic felicity,—and,

what is the greatest loss, the fearful consequence of all these—the loss of Heaven! For, “Be not deceived,” says the sacred Writer, “Neither the sensual nor drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God *.”

Are not all these losses (the certain issue, be assured, of an intemperate course) sufficient to warn you in your youth from the least approaches to **INTEMPERANCE**; sufficient to render you most scrupulously exact in your observance of the nicest rules of sobriety? If they are not, let me just add in conclusion, That this Vice, if once indulged, is of so peculiarly ruinous a nature, that it holds fast by a man more remarkably tenacious than any other; insomuch, that though converts from every other Vice are frequent, yet such are the effects of Intemperance upon the mind, so doth it stupify and deaden all the rational faculties; such a peculiar and immediate tendency hath it to harden the heart, to render callous to every good impression, or, as the wise man expresses it, “to take away the heart;” that very few examples of reformation from this

* 1 Cor. vi. 10.

Vice have been found: Men habituated to it, know not how to forsake it, but gradually grow worse and worse, till disease incapacitates, or death finishes their wretched being.

What a consideration, my young friends, to urge your strictest guard against Intemperance!—which, levelling you with the meanest and the lowest of the human race, making you the wretched companions of the most illiterate and most abandoned of your species; will rob you of all that personal elegance so amiable and so engaging in youth; will deprive you of the sweetest pleasures of that sweetest season of your life; and cause you to lament in age, in ignorance and disease, the unthrifty and improvident waste of a period, which can never be too much valued while possessed, which can never be too much deplored, when passed unimproved.

May the gracious Father of Heaven who gives you this period, and every other good gift, cause you to enjoy all its innocent and exquisite gratifications! May his almighty grace enable you duly to improve it to the

great increase of your knowledge; your wisdom, your Virtue! May he, of his unspeakable mercy in Christ Jesus, preserve you from every temptation dangerous to your innocence; and enable you so to persevere in the paths of pleasantness and peace, that you may afford the fullest satisfaction and the highest comfort to all who love you; and reap in your own peaceful and serene bosoms, a full, a triumphant reward here, exquisite foretaste of one infinitely more triumphant hereafter! AMEN.

S E R M O N XII.

P A R T II.

On Intemperance.

I CORINTHIANS ix. 25.

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

I Cannot suppose, my young friends;—let me still continue the voice of friendly exhortation to you—that any young man of good principles sets out with any other purpose than that which is truly commendable, of striving for, and earnestly wishing to obtain, the mastery. I cannot but suppose, that you all aim at, and will use your utmost endeavours to attain that high, that glorious prize of your calling, a religious and a happy life here, certain introduction to one eternally-happy hereafter.

It is not to be imagined,—You yourselves can never conceive, that such a prize, the greatest possible, can be attained, without

much care and attention. What is there in life, either great or good, which the hand of supineness and negligence will ever grasp? It is to unwearied and assiduous efforts, it is to the toil of Virtue, and the unfainting labour of Perseverance, that success and honour hold forth their glorious rewards: And if this be the case in worldly matters, in things of the least consequence, how much more so, do ye suppose it must be the case, with things of the highest moment—with the unutterable glories of eternity? Let not the thought discourage you. In the pursuit of worldly good, difficulties generally stimulate the generous mind to greater activity; pursuits of easy attainment are scorned and neglected. Though the path to glory and honour seem steep and rugged; (to everlasting glory, I mean, and immortal honour;) yet, through the goodness of Him, who sits the great proposer and spectator of the struggle, the way is strewn with variety of delights; and it is the peculiar praise of Religion and Virtue, that their strictest discipline is accompanied with the truest pleasure; and that they will render the combat delightful to all those, who have

courage enough to enter with their whole hearts into it.

This in particular is the case with that amiable Virtue of TEMPERANCE, which we endeavoured to recommend in a former Sermon, and without which, it is as fruitless for you to hope for the prize of an heavenly crown, as for those who contended in the olympic races and combats of old for an earthly one. “ Every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.”

Temperance is the preservation of the dominion of soul over sense, of reason over passion : It is the due government of ourselves ; and the want of it involves a number of evils, which utterly mar the peace, and destroy all the prospects of happy and successful life. It prejudices the health, the fortune, the conscience : It robs of personal elegance and of domestic felicity ; but, what is worst of all, it spoils us of our chief prerogative, degrades our reason, and renders us utterly incapable of the offices of religion. This hath been fully shewn ; and is not this suffi-

cient to convince us of the high obligations we are under to cultivate this Virtue, if we wish to obtain the prize ; if we wish to be happy ourselves, and to render happy those who are in any degree connected with us.

For, suffer not (my young friends) little narrow sentiments of selfish, solitary happiness to contract your hearts, and bound your prospects within yourselves. Enlarge your minds ; expand your ideas : You are not born for yourselves ; you cannot live for yourselves, if you mean to live virtuously and religiously : You must fill up a part in the great social world, and filling it up with propriety, will doubly bless yourselves by blessing others. Parents now are interested in your welfare : In a short period perhaps, the tender names of wife and children, and all the dear connections of domestic life, will have a mighty concern in your behaviour : You cannot be wretched, but They must partake of your wretchedness : You cannot, your good hearts will not suffer you to be happy alone ; They will, they must bask in the sunshine of all your felicity. See then how amiably, in this

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respect also, self-love unites with social; and both, in friendly alliance, unite to set forth the obligations you are under to be “temperate in all things.”

But further still, with self-love, and with social, the Public voice unites; for we shewed abundantly in the last Sermon, that the intemperate man is not only an enemy to himself, and to those immediately related to him, but he is an enemy to the community; in various respects an enemy; not only as neglecting to fill up properly the department in life assigned him; but as frequently involving others in great difficulties and distresses by his negligence and Vices, and very often becoming, in an higher degree, a pest and a nuisance to society. So that, if you mean to fulfil your duty in society; if you mean to be regarded and respected amongst your fellow-creatures; you are under the highest obligations to be temperate in all things.

But there are still greater obligations than these. It is true, the wisdom and goodness of God has so admirably concerted the plan of

human affairs, that a man must necessarily fulfil the highest duties, and act with the immediate approbation of his God, who does well to himself, to his relations, to mankind in general. A consideration, which should infinitely endear our God to us, who, out of his inexpressible mercy, creating us for perfect happiness, demands nothing as a service, but what tends to that happiness!

It is in this view He expects that we be temperate in all things; carefully abstaining from every excess in all our animal gratifications, which may render us unfit for the services of reason and religion; which may degrade us from rational to brutal. His great, his benevolent purpose is, to raise us from human to divine, from rational to angelic. Of all merely-human Virtues, Temperance is best calculated to serve this important purpose; it preserves the due dignity of the soul over the body; it preserves reason on her throne, and keeps the subject passions in obedience at her feet. It gives tranquillity to the mind, and keeps the conscience in peaceful serenity. Defecated and clear from

all the obstructing clouds and fumes of irregular indulgences, the soul sees around her, and soars aloft on the wings of sublime contemplation. Pure devotion wings her ardours to heaven, and all the Virtues and Graces of divine Religion attend in harmony on the soul, and present her with the sweetest foretaste of those celestial pleasures, which corrupted passions shall never defile, which irregular desires shall never interrupt. Temperance is the Virtue of angels, and makes man angelic. Angels are ever blessed, because their spirits are ever pure: Would man endeavour thro' divine grace to preserve that purity of spirit, according to the divine promise, he would ever see God:—He would enjoy the continual presence, and affectionate contemplation of his greatness and his love; like another Enoch, he would walk with God here, and like him assuredly be translated to walk with him eternally.

Thus religion lays us under the highest obligation, even by motives drawn from private happiness, to cultivate the virtue of Temperance. But further still, when we consider

the obligations of duty and gratitude to God, how forcible are they? Hath not the apostle told us,—with awakening truth told us, that “we are not our own,” that we have been “bought with a price;” a price, how inestimably great! passing all account, exceeding all value: For what can be put into the balance, what in earth or heaven can we compare, with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, the only begotten and beloved of the Father!

In this view, what conclusion so reasonable, I will say more, what conclusion more indispensably obligatory, than that of the apostle,—“Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s*.” God’s, by right of creation; still more so, by that high price of redemption, which his blessed son paid both in body and in spirit for you. Will you then, by Intemperance and Disorder, degrade and defile that body, pollute and destroy that soul, for which the blessed Jesus,—author of all mercy, God of all love,—gave his body to torment and suffering, “his back to the smiters, and his cheek to those who plucked off the hair;” for which the

* 1 Cor. vi. 20.

bleſſed Jeſus gave his ſoul to ſorrow, “exceeding ſorrow,—ſorrow even unto death; Deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief?”—Oh, my young friends, if there is any thing ingenuous in human nature, if there are any motives or arguments which can influence and perſuade the human heart; ſurely you have them all, in the condeſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt, the ſon of God, the King of glory; his matchleſs condeſcenſion for your ſakes, and for your ſalvation. Love, gratitude, duty, intereſt, all combine to enforce the apoſtle’s concluſion, grounded on the juſteſt principles; all combine to adviſe, to exhort, to command, that you “glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God’s.”

But, my young friends, let us mark well the expreſſion, “Therefore glorify God.” Great and awful Being! whoſe creative fiat gave exiſtence to this ſublunary world! whoſe tremendous frown can in a moment give it to deſtruction! Thou, who, conſummate in bliſs, art from eternity to eternity the ſame, uncontroulably great, unchangeably happy!

Eternal sovereign ! before whose throne all the hierarchies of heaven fall down, and confess themselves nothing in thy sight !—Can it be possible that we, whose dwellings are in houses of clay ; who are as easily crushed before thee as the feeblest moth ; whose days are vanity, and whose best actions are weakness and sin ; Can it be possible, great God ! that we can glorify Thee ? That our frail bodies, or our imperfect souls can bring augmentation to thy honour, or by any means increase the riches of thy glory ?—We are humbled to the dust by the solemn information : We will believe it, because thy word of truth hath said it ; We will believe it, because thou hast given us undeniable proof that our welfare is dear to thee, that thy glory is indeed concerned in the salvation of mankind ; For thou hast given thy son to purchase that salvation ! Thou wilt not then, O gracious giver of all good gifts ! thou wilt not withhold thy grace, but enable us to act worthy the high, the ennobling motive ; wilt enable us to look to thy glory in all our actions, and to make it the grand, the leading principle of our lives !

No, my young friends, God will not withhold his grace from you, if you ask it sincerely for his dear Son's sake : He who gave the greater, will never refuse the less gift : " He who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ? " Give us his grace more especially, when we ask it with so laudable an intention, as thereby to be empowered to walk worthy our high vocation ; to glorify God in our body and in our spirit ?

To the other motives, therefore, which we have urged, let this peculiarly be added ; the lively, the honourable, the invigorating motive, " That frail as we are, and corrupted by sin ; yet, by asserting the dignity of our nature, yet, by preserving our bodies temperate and pure, as the temples of the living God ; yet, by elevating our souls above the attachment and pollution of earthly debasements ; yet by acting as becometh the servants and sons of God, we can bring glory to the God who made and redeemed us ; can render his name more illustrious on earth ; can make the reli-

gion he has established still more and more amiable; can encrease the number of his servants below; and shall add to the number of his angels above!"

Can you want further motives to the Virtue of Temperance? If you do,—see them in the example of the blessed Jesus! Which you are not only called upon, but on every account interested, to imitate.

He was the pattern of the strictest temperance and moderation. Though we find him occasionally at feasts and entertainments, yet we find him not only always master of himself, but making the cheerfulness of those entertainments subservient to the great end of his ministry; the glory of God, and the good of men's souls. Thus emphatically teaching us always to preserve the dominion of our minds, and a disposition, in consequence, to all acts of benevolence and religion.

But I should wrong the subject, nay, I should think myself guilty of little less than

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blasphemy, were I to assert barely that the blessed Jesus was temperate, was moderate, was always master of himself.—He was infinitely more: His heaven-directed soul continually presided over his body, which He (a sufferer for our sakes even from his birth) kept in a state of continual abstinence and mortification. So that with respect to Temperance, you not only have him as the supreme Master, Encourager and Pattern of the Virtue, but as the severest reprover of Intemperance; which surely must of all things least become the disciples of a mortified and self-denying Saviour; the foundation of whose discipline is laid in abstinence, and in the subdual of all those passions, which intemperance of appetite introduced. Well, therefore, in this respect may we apply his own words, “Why call ye me Master and Lord, and do not the things that I say?” Christian signifies “A follower of Christ.” Pythagoreans, Epicureans, all the sects of old, made it their labour, and made it their boast, to imitate the Master whose name they assumed, and whose discipline they embraced. Shall these persons, who followed vain and

fallible men, and embraced vain and erroneous doctrines; shall they rise up in condemnation against Us, who blindly and absurdly assume and glory in the name of Christians—our master infallible, and his doctrine unerring rectitude,—while we are equally inattentive to the one and the other?—If this is to be Christians, no wonder that Infidels laugh at and despise us. You will mark the absurdity, I trust, my young friends, and consider yourselves as under the highest, the most indispensable obligations, if you assume the name and profess the Faith, to copy the Pattern, and conform to the Precepts of Jesus Christ; and not only with respect to the present Virtue which I am enforcing, but to all others, will labour to be, what your name imports, Christians indeed; that is, sincere imitators of the mind and manners which were in CHRIST.

If you reflect at all, I am persuaded that what I have urged will be abundantly sufficient to convince you of the importance and necessity of Temperance to all your best present and future interests, and to induce a

resolution in your breasts, of abstaining from every the least appearance of, or approach to the contrary Vice. And I am equally persuaded, my young friends, that if you maintain, as I have recommended, a lively sense of religion upon your souls, with a constant recurrence to God for the supplies of his grace, you will find it sufficient to preserve you in the practice of Temperance.

But, as human nature is most frail; as occasions and temptations frequently prove the destruction of the best-established Virtue, without the strictest guard; as religion by no means precludes the succours of human prudence, but supplies and sanctifies them; Permit me to conclude what I had to offer on this subject, with a few Rules, which may be of use, and which you will apply as your necessities may require.

In the First place, happy still in uncorrupted youth, lay the reins on your appetite now, and keep them still stedfast and unloosed. Accustom yourselves to frequent restraints, that you may better preserve and render your

inferior passions tractable: Frequent restraints and self-denials are necessary means to secure men's innocence, as they not only preserve from excess, but keep at a proper distance from the brink of it; for if men suffer themselves to come into the way of excess, or to go to the utmost bounds of things lawful, they may loose the reins, and be plunged from the edge of the precipice on which they have too incautiously ventured. "He is fit to sit at the table of the Lord, and to feast with Saints, says a wise man, who moderately uses the creatures which God hath given him. But he who despises even lawful pleasures, shall not only sit and feast with God, but reign together with him, and partake of his glorious kingdom."

Be careful, Secondly, to avoid the ensnaring Company of the Intemperate: It is Solomon's advice, "Be not amongst wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh." All Bad Company, we have shewn, is sufficiently pernicious; but is peculiarly so in the present case, as men are often seduced to this Vice by a too easy compliance in public, which in

privacy, or among proper companions, they would totally have avoided : and many a man owes his excess, perhaps his ruin, to false shame ; which hinders him from asserting the freedom to which every man would claim a right in almost every other instance. Certainly, in a cool hour, resolutions may be formed, which will stand the attack of a boisterous jest, from noisy and despicable Companions.

Thirdly, maintaining a fixed detestation of the lowest degree of Intemperance, be peculiarly on your guard, when in the way of temptation. The wise man exhorts to put a knife to the throat, when there is any probability of exceeding the due moderation.

Fourthly, beware of beginnings ; habits of Intemperance steal on insensibly : Too many examples, I fear, are within the notice of us all, of persons, once apparently the most sober and regular, sunk, through want of proper caution at first, into total sensuality ; lost to God, the world, and themselves ; feeding, unhappy, on the very husks with swine ;

who once fed with angels, and ate the bread of life !

Fifthly, if you have often lost the command of yourself, when a certain quantity of liquor has been exceeded, you should be more than ordinarily careful always to keep yourself much within that quantity.

Take care, Sixthly, that you never, by bad custom, make strong liquors necessary to your refreshment ; nor ever, under cares or trouble of any kind, fly to them for ease : For, be assured, whatever temporary relief may arise from such a practice,—from mere stupefaction ; the remedy is worse than the disease ; and will only in the end multiply your troubles, and augment your cares tenfold. In all human troubles, in all the trials and afflictions of this life, the best cordial, the draught of never-failing comfort, is the religion of Jesus ; is the faith and love of God our Father.

I observe, in the last place, that while we live in an habitual and stated course of Tem-

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perance every day, we should make it a rule, not only to abstain on some certain days from food wholly; or at least from as much as we can, consistently with our health; but also, at other times, we should abstain partially, and take a less quantity than usual. For it is certain, that Fasting is not only necessary as an evangelical duty, but as immediately conducive to the Virtue of Temperance, and, in a due degree, to the health of the human frame. Very rarely is that frame injured by abstinence; every day it is shocked, diseased, and destroyed by intemperate repletion.

These rules, seconded by such as your own prudence, experience and constitution shall suggest, and united with the motives we have before offered, will be sufficient to keep you temperate in all things, while striving for the mastery. And, to close all, consider, my young friends, what an indignity, what a reproach, what a condemnation it will be, that they who, as St. Paul tells us, strive only for the poor perishing prizes of this world, for corruptible crowns, from the hands of corruptible mortals; that they should

be temperate in all things, keeping under their bodies, and avoiding all excess; while You, while Christians, who have an incorruptible crown, an everlasting unfading prize to receive at the hands of the God of the whole earth, are but little anxious to secure it! indulgent, intemperate, voluptuous!—Scorn the reproach, and take up the resolution of Saint Paul; deeply reflecting, if such a resolution were necessary for Him, how much more necessary must it be for each of Us! “Every man (saith he) that striveth for the mastery, in the olympic races, is temperate in all things: Now They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible: I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: Sure of the victory, certain of my prize; because I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, while I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.”

ANECDOTES, recommending the Virtue of
Temperance.

(1.) “ Temperance, says Sir William Temple, is a Virtue without pride; a fortune without envy; which gives ease to the body, and tranquillity to the mind; is the best guardian of youth, and the support of old Age; the precept of reason as well as religion, and the physician of the soul as well as of the body: It is the tutelar goddess of health, and universal medicine of life; that clears the head, and cleanses the blood; that eases the stomach, strengthens the nerves, enlightens the eyes, and comforts the heart: In a word, it secures and perfects the digestion, and thereby avoids those causes to which we owe the cholic and the spleen; those crudities and sharp humours which feed the scurvy and the gout, and those dregs out of which the gravel and stone are formed within us; diseases by which we often condemn ourselves to greater torments and miseries in life, than have perhaps been yet invented by anger or revenge, or inflicted by

the greatest tyrants upon the worst of men!
See his works, vol. iii. 8vo. p. 262.

(2.) Anacharsis the Scythian, in order to deter young men from that voluptuousness, which is ever attended with ill effects, applied his discourse to them in a parable; telling them "That the vine of youthful gratification and Intemperance had three branches, producing three clusters; on the first, says he, grows Pleasure; on the second Sottishness; and on the third Sadness."

(3.) One of our most celebrated Poets has somewhere observed, that

"Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain."

The following may serve as an instance. Chremes of Greece, though a young man, was very infirm and sickly, through a course of luxury and Intemperance, and subject to those strange sorts of fits which are called Trances. In one of these, he thought that a Philosopher came to sup with him; who, out of all the dishes served up at the table, would only eat of one, and that the most simple: Yet his conversation was sprightly,

his knowledge great, his countenance chearful, and his constitution strong. When the Philosopher took his leave, he invited Chremes to sup with him at an house in the neighbourhood: This also took place in his imagination; and he thought he was received with the most polite and affectionate tokens of friendship; but was greatly surprized when supper came up, to find nothing but milk and honey, and a few roots dressed up in the plainest manner; to which chearfulness and good sense were the only sauces. As Chremes was unused to this kind of diet, and could not eat, the Philosopher ordered another table to be spread more to his taste, and immediately there succeeded a banquet, composed of the most artificial dishes that luxury could invent, with great plenty and variety of the richest and most intoxicating wines. These too were accompanied by damsels of bewitching beauty. And now Chremes gave a loose to his appetites, and every thing he tasted raised extasies beyond what he had ever known. During the repast the damsels sung and danced to entertain him; their charms enchanted the enraptured guest, already heated

with what he had drank ; his senses were lost in extatic confusion ; every thing around him seemed elysium, and he was upon the point of indulging the most boundless freedom :—When lo ! on a sudden their beauty, which was but a vizard, fell off, and discovered to his view forms the most hideous and forbidding imaginable. Lust, Revenge, Folly, Murder, meagre Poverty and frantic Despair now appeared in their most odious shapes, and the place instantly became the direst scene of misery and desolation. How often did Chremes wish himself far distant from such diabolical company, and how dread the fatal consequence which threatened him on every side ! His blood ran chill to his heart ; his knees smote against each other with fear, and joy and rapture were turned into astonishment and horror. When the Philosopher perceived that this scene had made a sufficient impression on his guest, he thus addressed him : “ Know, Chremes, it is I, it is Æsculapius, who have thus entertained you ; and what you have here beheld, is a true image of the deceitfulness and misery inseparable from Luxury and Intemperance.

Would you be happy, be temperate. Temperance is the parent of Health, Virtue, Wisdom, Plenty, and of every thing that can render you happy in this world, or the world to come. It is indeed the true luxury of life; for without it life cannot be enjoyed." This said, he disappeared, and Chremes awaking, and instructed by the vision, altered his course of life, became frugal, temperate, industrious, and by that means so mended his health and estate, that he lived without pain to a very old age, and was esteemed one of the richest, best, and wisest men in Greece.

(4.) Such is the beautiful moral drawn by the pen of elegant and instructive Fiction; with which, if there be any mind so insensible as not to be properly affected, let us only turn to that striking Reality, presented to us in the case of Lewis Cornaro. This gentleman was a Venetian of noble extraction, and memorable for having lived to an extreme old age; for he was more than an hundred years old at the time of his death, which happened at Padua in the year 1565. A-

mongst other little performances, he left behind him a piece, intituled, "*De vitæ sobriæ commodis*;" that is, Of the advantages of a temperate life; of which we will here give our readers some account, not only because it will very well illustrate the life and character of our Author; but may possibly be of use to those who take the summum bonum, or chief good of life, to consist in good eating. He was moved, it seems, to compose this little piece, at the request, and for the benefit of some ingenious young men, for whom he had a regard; and who, having long since lost their parents, and seeing him, then eighty-one years old, in a fine florid state of health, were desirous to know of him what it was that enabled him to preserve, as he did, a sound mind in a sound body, to so extreme an age: He describes to them, therefore, his whole manner of living, and the regimen he had always pursued, and was then pursuing. He tells them, that when he was young, he was very intemperate; that his Intemperance had brought upon him many and grievous disorders; that from the thirty-fifth to the fortieth year of his age,

he spent his nights and days in the utmost anxiety and pain; and that, in short, his life was grown a burden to him. The physicians, however, as he relates, notwithstanding all the vain and fruitless efforts which they made to restore his health, told him, that there was one medicine still remaining, which had never been tried, but, which, if they could but prevail with him to use with perseverance, might free him, in time, from all his complaints; and that was, a temperate and regular way of living. They added, moreover, that, unless he resolved to apply instantly to it, his case would soon become desperate; and there would be no hopes at all of his recovery. Upon this he immediately prepared himself for his new regimen; and now began to eat and drink nothing but what was proper for one in his weak habit of body: but this at first was very disagreeable to him. He often wanted to live again in his old manner; and did indeed indulge himself in a freedom of diet sometimes, without the knowledge of his physicians; but, as he informs us, much to his own detriment and uneasiness. Driven, in the

mean time, by the necessity of the thing, and resolutely exerting all the powers of his understanding, he, at last, grew confirmed in a settled and uninterrupted course of Temperance; by virtue of which, as he assures us, all his disorders had left him in less than a year: And he had been a firm and healthy man, from thence forward, till the time in which he wrote his treatise.

To shew what security a life of Temperance affords against the ill consequences of hurts and disasters, he relates the following accident, which befel him, when he was very old. One day, being out in his chariot, and his coachman driving somewhat faster than ordinary, he had the misfortune to be overturned, and dragged by the horses a considerable way upon the ground. His head, his arms, and his whole body were very much bruised, and one of his ancles was put out of joint. In this condition he was carried home; and the physicians seeing how grievously he had suffered, concluded it impossible that he should live three days to an end. They were, however, mistaken; for, by

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bleeding, and evacuating medicines, the usual method of treating persons in like cases, he presently recovered, and arrived at his former stability and firmness.

Some sensualists, as it appears, had objected to his abstemious manner of living; and, in order to evince the reasonableness of their own, had urged, that it was not worth while to mortify one's appetites at such a rate, for the sake of being old, since all that was life, after the age of sixty-five, could not properly be called *vita viva*, sed *vita mortua*: Not a living life, but a dead life. "Now, says he, to shew these gentlemen how much they are mistaken, I will briefly run over the satisfactions and pleasures which I myself enjoy, in this eighty-third year of my age. In the first place, I am always well, and so active withal, that I can, with ease, mount a horse upon a flat, or walk to the tops of very high mountains. In the next place, I am always chearful, pleasant, perfectly contented, and free from all perturbation, and every uneasy thought. I have none of that *fastidium vitæ*, that satiety of

life, so often to be met with in persons of my age. I frequently converse with men of parts and learning, and spend much of my time in reading and writing. These things I do just as opportunity serves, or my humour invites me, and all in my own house at Padua. I frequently make excursions to some of the neighbouring cities, for the sake of seeing my friends, and conversing with adepts in all arts and sciences; architects, painters, statuaries, musicians, and even husbandmen. I contemplate their works, compare them with the ancients, and am always learning something which it is agreeable to know. I take a view of palaces, gardens, antiquities, public buildings, temples, fortifications, and endeavour to let nothing escape me which may afford the least amusement to a rational mind. Nor are these pleasures at all blunted by the usual imperfections of great age; for I enjoy all my senses in perfect vigour; my taste, especially, in so high a degree, that I have a better relish for the plainest food now, than I had for the choicest delicacies formerly, when immersed in a life of luxury. Nay, to let you see what a portion of fire

and spirit I have still left within me, be pleased to know, that I have, this very year, written a comedy, full of innocent mirth and pleafantry; and, as I fay, if a Greek Poet was thought fo healthy and happy, for writing a tragedy at the age of feventy-three, why fhould not I be thought as healthy and as happy, who have written a comedy when I am ten years older? In fhort, that no pleafure whatever may be wanting to my old-age, I pleafe myfelf daily with contemplating that immortality, which I think I fee in the fucceffion of my pofterity. For, every time I return home, I meet eleven grandchildren, all the offspring of one father and mother; all in fine health; all, as far as I can difcern, apt to learn, and of a good behaviour. I am often amused by their finging; nay, I often fing with them, becaufe my voice is ftronger and clearer now than ever it was in my life before. Thefe are the delights and comforts of my old-age; from which, I prefume, it appears, that the life I fpend is not a dead, morofe, and melancholy life, but a living, active, pleafant life; which I would not exchange with the moft robuft of thofe youths,

who indulge and riot in all the luxury of the senses, because I know them to be exposed to a thousand diseases, and a thousand kinds of death. I, on the contrary, am free from all such apprehensions; from the apprehensions of Disease, because I have nothing in my constitution for a Disease to feed upon; from the apprehensions of Death, because I have spent a life of reason. Besides, death, I am persuaded, is not yet near me. I know that, barring accidents, no violent disease can touch me. I must be dissolved by a gentle and gradual decay, when the radical humour is consumed, like oil in a lamp, which affords no longer life to the dying taper. But such a death as this cannot happen of a sudden. To become unable to walk and reason, to become blind, deaf, and bent to the earth, from all which evils I am far remote at present, must take a considerable portion of time; and I verily believe, that the immortal soul, which still inhabits my body with so much harmony and complacency, will not easily depart from it yet. I verily believe that I have many years to live, many years to enjoy the world, and its blessings by virtue of that

strict sobriety and Temperance which I have so long and so religiously observed ; friend as I am to reason ; but a foe to sense.”—Thus far this good and wise Philosopher ; who was known afterwards to have prophesied very truly concerning his future health and happiness.” See the Christian’s Magazine, volume v. page 484 ; and the Spectator, No. 195. in which Mr. Addison observes further,

(5.) “ It is said of Diogenes, that meeting a young man who was going to a feast, he took him up in the street, and carried him home to his friends, as one who was running into imminent danger, had not he prevented him. What would that Philosopher have said, had he been present at the gluttony of a modern meal ? Would not he have thought the master of a family mad, and have begged his servants to tie down his hands, had he seen him devour fowl, fish and flesh ; swallow oil and vinegar, wines and spices ; throw down sallads of twenty different herbs, sauces of an hundred ingredients, confections, and fruits of numberless sweets and flavours ?

What unnatural motions and counter-ferments must such a medley of Intemperance produce in the body ! For my own part, when I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence, I fancy I see Gouts and Dropsies, Fevers and Lethargies, with other innumerable distempers, lying in ambuscade among the dishes."

(6.) The testimony of a good Conscience, is such a pleasure (says Dr. South) as never fatigates or wearies : For when age itself, which of all things in the world will not be baffled or defied, shall begin to seize and remind us of our mortality, by pains, aches, deadness of limb, and dulness of sense ; yet then, even then, the pleasure of the mind shall be in its full youth, vigour, and freshness. A palsy may as well shake an oak, or a fever dry up a fountain, as either of them shake, dry up, or impair the delight of Conscience : For it lives within ; it centers in the heart ; it grows into the very substance of the soul ; so that it accompanies a man to his grave : he never outlives it ; and that for this cause only, because he cannot outlive

himself.—How short of this, are the delights of the Epicure! How vastly disproportionate are the pleasures of the eating, and those of the thinking man! Indeed, as different as the silence of an Archimedes in the study of a problem, and the stillness of a sow at her wash. Do not the pleasures of a voluptuous man expire while they satisfy, and after a few minutes, determine in loathing and uneasiness? How short is the interval between the pleasure and the burden! The necessities of nature are quickly and easily provided for; and then, all that follows is a load and an oppression: Every morsel to a satisfied hunger, is only a new labour to a tired digestion: Every draught to him who has quenched his thirst, is but a further quenching of nature. He that prolongs his meals, and sacrifices his time, as well as his other conveniences to his luxury, how quickly does he outsit his pleasure! and then, how is all the following time bestowed upon ceremony and surfeit! till at length, after a long fatigue of eating, drinking and babbling, he concludes the great work of dining genteely, and so makes a shift to rise from table, that he may lie down

upon his bed; where after he has slept himself into some use of himself, with much ado he staggers to his table again, and there acts over the same brutish scene. So that he passes his whole life in a dozed condition, with a kind of drowfiness and confusion upon his senses: With what pleasure it can be, is hard to conceive. All that is of it dwells upon the tip of the tongue, and within the compass of his palate. A worthy prize for a man to purchase with the loss of his time, his reason, and himself!

(7.) Nothing can be more worthy a serious perusal, than the latter part of the 23d Chapter of Proverbs, to guard men against the odious Vice of Drunkenness. In v. 33, &c. the Writer bids us mark the particular ill effects of it. "Thine eyes, says he, shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth on the top of a mast." That is, "Thou wilt sottishly run thyself into the extremest hazards, without any apprehensions of danger; being no more able to direct thy

course, then a Pilot, who slumbers when the ship is tossed in the midst of the sea; no more able to take notice of the perils thou art in, than he who falls asleep on the top of a mast, where he was set to keep watch."—He goes on, "They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not. When shall I awake?—I will seek it yet again."—There is great beauty and energy in the conciseness of the original: What we render "I was not sick," should rather be, "and I was not sensible of it." The next clause should be, "They have mocked me, and I knew it not."—They have stricken me, and I was not sensible of it: They have mocked me, and I knew it not! How striking and instructive a pourtrait is this of the stupid insensibility of a drunkard! Mr. Prior in his Solomon has well expressed it in the following lines. There are, says he,

—"Yet unnumber'd ills that lie unseen,
In the pernicious draught: The word obscene,
Or harsh, (which once elanc'd must ever fly
Irrevocable;) the too prompt reply,

Seed of severe distrust, and fierce debate,
 What we should shun, and what we ought to hate.
 Add too, the blood impoverish'd, and the course
 Of health suppress'd by wine's continued force.
 Unhappy man ! Whom sorrow thus, and rage
 To different ills alternately engage :
 Who drinks, alas ! but to forget ; nor sees
 That melancholy sloth, severe disease,
 Memory confus'd, and interrupted thought,
 Death's harbingers, lie latent in the draught ;
 And in the flowers that wreath the sparkling bowl,
 Fell adders hiss, and poisonous serpents roll."

(8.) Another Writer has given us as lively
 a picture of the opposite Virtue :

" The sad effects of Luxury are these ;
 We drink our poison, and we eat disease :
 Not so, O Temperance bland ! when rul'd by thee ;
 The brute's obedient, and the man is free :
 Soft are his slumbers, balmy is his rest,
 His veins not boiling from the midnight feast.
 'Tis to thy rules, bright Temperance, we owe
 All pleasures which from health and strength can flow ;
 Vigour of body, purity of mind,
 Unclouded reason, sentiments refin'd ;
 Unmix'd, untainted joys, without remorse,
 Th' intemperate sensualist's never-failing curse."

(9.) If there ever was a man, who in a worldly sense “ strove for the mastery,” it was Charles the 12th of Sweden; and accordingly his history tells us, that he was remarkably “ Temperate,” in order to the attainment of His end: Even his boisterous and romantic character therefore, may edify and improve wiser and better minds. “ The earlier days of his administration, says Voltaire, gave no favourable ideas of him; it seemed as if he had been more impatient to reign, than worthy of it. He had indeed no dangerous passion; but nothing was to be seen in his conduct, but the fallies of youthful impetuosity and obstinacy. He appeared quite careless and haughty. The Ambassadors from other courts even took him for a very moderate genius, and painted him as such to their several masters. Sweden too had the same opinion of him, and no body knew his real character. Nor did he know it himself, till the sudden storms that burst forth in the northern world, gave his hidden talents an opportunity of displaying themselves. But then, every one was in the highest degree surprized to see him instantane-

ously renounce all, even the most innocent amusements of his youthful days. From the moment he prepared for war, he commenced a life entirely new, from which he never after varied in the least. Full of the idea of Alexander and of Cæsar, he purposed to imitate in those conquerors, every thing but their Vices. He no longer consulted magnificence, or regarded sports or relaxations; he reduced his table to the exactest frugality. He had been hitherto fond of splendor in his apparel; from henceforward he dressed himself only as a common soldier: He had been suspected of having entertained a passion for a lady of his court;—but, whether this circumstance be true or not, it is certain, that from thenceforth he for ever renounced the sex; not merely for fear of being governed by them, but to set an example to his soldiers, whom he wished to preserve in the strictest discipline; and perhaps, also from a vanity of being the only King who had conquered a propensity so difficult to subdue. He likewise resolved to abstain from wine all the rest of his life; not, as some have pretended, because he would punish in him-

self an excess, which was said to have led him into actions unworthy of his character; (for nothing is more false than this popular report) but because it too much stimulated his fiery temper: Nay, he even quitted beer, and reduced himself to pure water. To crown the whole, we must remember that Sobriety was then a Virtue entirely new in the north, and therefore Charles was determined to be a pattern to his Swedes in every particular." See Voltaire's Life of Charles xii. p. 13, and 24. 2d Edit.

(10.) Cato the Censor constantly represented to his countrymen in the Senate, the fatal consequences of that Luxury, which in his time began to introduce itself into the Roman Republic. Observing the large strides which his nation made upon Greece and Asia, provinces filled with all the delicacies and dangerous baits of pleasurable indulgence, and how the Romans were beginning to lay their hands on the treasures of distant Kings; "I am greatly afraid, said he, that we shall become slaves to these foreign riches, instead of being their masters; and that these

conquered nations will conquer Us in their turn, by communicating to us their Examples and their Vices." His fears we know were not imaginary; and all he had foreseen came to pass, to the ruin of his country.

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

(II.) But what then is this subtle secret poison, which thus lurks under the pomp of Luxury, and the charms of Intemperance; enervating at the same time the whole strength of body, and the whole vigor and superiority of the mind?—The solution is plain. The natural effect of voluptuousness and delicacy, which are the inseparable companions of Luxury, is to render Men subject to a multitude of false wants and necessities; to make their happiness depend upon a thousand trifling conveniencies and superfluities, which they can no longer be without, and to give them an unreasonable fondness for life; thus stifling in them the great and only true motives of glory, of zeal for their Prince, and love to their country, while it renders them selfish and sordid, fearful and cowardly; and hinders them from exposing themselves to dan-

gers, which may in a moment deprive them of all those things wherein they place their felicity. ENGLAND is now become a rich, a victorious, a polite and scientific nation. Now therefore is the period, in which we ought to keep a more than ordinary vigilance over our manners; and to establish a few needful restraints, to preserve as long as we can, some degree of industry, frugality, and fortitude alive among us; that so the day may be late, in which we are probably to sink—God grant, we may not irrecoverably sink, under our great prosperities; as but too many nations of past ages have done before us, and are now no more!

THE NEW YORK

the city of New York is a most interesting place to visit. It is a city of many wonders, and it is a city of many beauties. It is a city of many great men, and it is a city of many great things. It is a city of many great deeds, and it is a city of many great hopes. It is a city of many great dreams, and it is a city of many great aspirations. It is a city of many great achievements, and it is a city of many great successes. It is a city of many great failures, and it is a city of many great lessons. It is a city of many great joys, and it is a city of many great sorrows. It is a city of many great loves, and it is a city of many great hates. It is a city of many great friendships, and it is a city of many great enemies. It is a city of many great triumphs, and it is a city of many great defeats. It is a city of many great victories, and it is a city of many great losses. It is a city of many great gains, and it is a city of many great losses. It is a city of many great pleasures, and it is a city of many great pains. It is a city of many great happinesses, and it is a city of many great sorrows. It is a city of many great loves, and it is a city of many great hates. It is a city of many great friendships, and it is a city of many great enemies. It is a city of many great triumphs, and it is a city of many great defeats. It is a city of many great victories, and it is a city of many great losses. It is a city of many great gains, and it is a city of many great losses. It is a city of many great pleasures, and it is a city of many great pains. It is a city of many great happinesses, and it is a city of many great sorrows.

S E R M O N XIII.

On Gaming.

LUKE xvi. 3. latter part.

I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

THIS is part of the unjust Steward's severe self-remonstrance, when called upon to render up his accounts of a stewardship, in which he had been sadly unfaithful: "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed!"—A more distressful and pitiable situation cannot be conceived, than one, where labour and honest industry are impossible to the more delicately educated, or vice-enervated body; and where humble submission, and a cry for mercy are no less impossible to the arrogant and over-bearing mind! Yet such, alas, is the wretched situation to which a vicious waste of fortune frequently reduces!

The sacred writer does not inform us in what manner this person wasted his own and his Lord's goods: The word used on this occasion implies a dissipation of them, without

any attention to future advantage*; and is the same with that used in a former chapter, to express the extravagance of the prodigal Son, who is said to have “wasted his substance in riotous living.” We have no need to enquire after the methods of spending a fortune in a life of Riot and Luxury; or—if the terms shall suit the subject better—in a life of Politeness and Pleasure. There is, however, one mode of doing so, one method of dissipating the substance however considerable, to which, it is likely, neither this Steward, nor this youthful Extravagant, as fine gentlemen, were strangers; a method extremely common in the present times, and the pursuit of which has, of all things, the best chance to reduce a man to the situation referred to in the text. It will be easily understood that I mean GAMING;—another of those False Pleasures, my young friends, which I have undertaken to develope and decry, for your sake and for your preservation; and one, from which you can never be too minutely cautioned, too strongly guarded; as it has

* Διασποράν. See my Sermons on the miracles and parables, Vol. iv. p. 58.

custom and fashion so powerfully to plead on its side, "though pregnant with almost every evil, and the fatal source of miseries the most distressful to man."

We will endeavour to make this appear: But first, in order to prevent mistakes or misapprehensions in tender consciences, it may be proper to distinguish a little; and to consider *PLAY* as an Amusement, before we speak of it as a Vice.

Whatever some divines, and moralists of a severer cast, may urge against *Play* in the general, as hurtful and criminal; as contrary to duty, and dangerous to salvation; thus much, I think, may be asserted with truth, upon the most candid and rational state of the case; That "Amusements and relaxations being in a high degree necessary to the human mind, as well as to the harmony and continuance of cultivated society, *PLAY*, considered merely as an amusement or relaxation, and pursued only as such, can never be criminal; is in no respects contrary to the laws of God, or of Reason."—And, as almost all nations

have permitted and used diversions of this sort, Games of chance or hazard ; it would seem rather too severe a censure on the general opinion of mankind, to condemn them in the gross. Nor can any sufficient cause of censure, in my judgment at least, be urged, if they be limited as above: Nay, if so limited, it is unquestionable that they may be made the occasion of shewing without ostentation, “ Nobleness of sentiment,” “ Justness of understanding,” “ Politeness of manners,” and “ Evenness of temper.” But then, we must be extremely careful,—in order to attain ends so excellent,—to keep within the limits specified: We must be extremely careful not to suffer a matter of mere amusement to deviate into a blameable excess; which becomes the case with Play, when it is immoderately pursued, occasions avaricious desires, or ruffles in any degree the serenity of the temper.

All amusements, of whatsoever kind, how innocent or allowable soever in themselves, become highly blameable, when immoderately pursued: For thus, while their proper

end and design is perverted, they are not only preposterously made the business of life, but unhappily interfere with, and prejudice its true business. Besides, a continued attention to, and thirst for amusements above all things, tends to weaken the nobler powers of the soul; to take off the mind from better and more important subjects; to shut up every avenue from just and serious reflection; and in short, to induce a perfect dissipation and annihilation of thought. And, as thus destroying all power of improvement in Virtue, and by consequence tending directly to extinguish it wholly; such an attachment to Play, or any other amusement, unquestionably partakes of the nature of Vice, and will therefore stand exposed to all its consequences.

If, farther, it is not only immoderately, but avariciously pursued, and ceases to be a calm and cheering relaxation of the mind, by irritating, disturbing, and agitating the passions, it instantly loses all its innocence; it is no longer to be justified or excused: It stands condemn'd as criminal; and is no

more to be considered as an harmless Amusement, but as a pernicious Vice.

And certainly, as a "VICE," there is nothing more pregnant with mischiefs and miseries to mankind: For, in the first place, GAMING owes its birth * to one of the meanest and most despicable principles which actuate the human mind; a principle so low and base, so contrary to the laws of Reason, of Nature, and of God, that no man was ever found hardy enough to avow and acknowledge its influence! Yet, from this AVARICE, vile and contemptible as it is, Gaming, whether in a higher or lower sphere, undoubtedly derives its original; It being inconceivable, upon the principles of reason and good sense, that any man should either subject his mind to the continual tortures and anxieties which the Gamester must feel; or should put his fortune to the hazard at the

* The reader will observe, that we speak here of Gaming, absolutely consider'd. We do not say or think, that every man who plays or plays deep is a covetous man: There have been, we believe there may be, instances to the contrary. Those instances however are very rare. See pages 303, 4-

Gaming Table, from any motive less forcible and prevalent, than the covetous desire and expectation of increasing that fortune.

Other motives, and other causes, it is true, may co-operate and lead young and unexperienced adventurers to that table: They may commence dupes, but dupes they can never continue. The practice pursued unavoidably induces other principles; and whatever men commence, it may be said with strict truth, that if they persevere, they must end knaves: For their principle (that only principle which can induce them to persevere) never yet was found over-nice in points of honour or of honesty: And it would be as absurd to expect either, from a mind actuated by avarice, as to expect streams of generous wine from a foul pool of stagnated water.

But, if no good streams can be expected to flow from such a principle, evil ones in abundance will flow. Usury, injustice, and every illegal method of procuring money, which can be pursued with any tolerable degree of safety, and often, at the extremest

hazard of reputation and of life, will certainly take place in such circumstances : And whether gain or loss ensues, the same evil dispositions, and the same illicit practices will, more or less, assuredly shew themselves. For how should it be otherwise in minds wholly depraved as theirs must need be, wholly devoid of moral or religious principles, who give themselves up to a Vice, connected with such a variety of evils as Gaming ?

One of the worst and most pernicious of these, is, “ An introduction into that abandoned and worthless society which always surround the Gaming-Table.” And if nothing be so prejudicial to youth, nothing so much to be guarded against as Evil Company *, no Vice can be so dangerous to them as Gaming ; since there is none whereby they are so likely to reap an abundant harvest of this kind. The truth is, Gaming levels distinctions of every sort ; and so strange is the bewitching infatuation, that men of the first characters and the first fortunes are unable, with this fatal mist before their

* See Vol. i. p. 209.

eyes, to discern the sharper from the peer ; the beggar from the wealthy ; or even the friend from the professed and profligate cheat. Indeed friendship, though a name often used on these occasions, is used only as a bait to ensnare and destroy * : And the noble boast of Gaming is, that as it levels all Distinctions, so it bids an adieu to all the Virtues ; and while the tyrant passion rages, suspends or stagnates at least all the just and honourable affections of the soul ; insomuch that not friendship only becomes a name, but all the sacred dictates of religion, nay, and the laws of society are broken through : No times, places or seasons, however holy, are respected : Even “ Sunday shines no sabbath-day to such. ” And what is more if possible than all this, even the dear connections of wife, of children, of relations, are, with unrelenting

* An excellent Writer speaking of this kind of men, says of them, “ That they are to the light, unthinking part of the world, what the Spider is to the Fly : They wait with cool, deliberate, unwearied patience, till they get their prey within their nets, and then drain out their vitals without remorse ; Or, to speak more properly, enjoy their dying complaints. ”
Delaney's Sermons, Vol. ii.

fury, sacrificed on the altar of this destructive dæmon !

And as it thus extinguishes the most amiable and excellent passions in the soul ; as it introduces to the vilest society, and levels all distinctions ; so does it conduce, above all things, to mar the peace and tranquillity of the mind, and to discompose, in the most frightful manner, the sweetness and serenity of the temper. Indeed, what sweetness or serenity can that mind enjoy, which, ever on the rack of painful torturing anxiety, knows not a moment's respite from the tumultuous agitation of hopes and fears !—No proof of this can be wanting to those, who have at any time been present at a Gaming-Table ! where the paleness and dejection sitting on the countenances of some, the horrible perturbation working on the brows of others ; the fearful blasphemies and execrations heard on all sides ; the mutual recriminations, quarrels, oaths and curses, present the astonished and terrified spectator with the fullest and most dreadful idea of the court and midnight orgies of death and of hell !

And this—oh gracious God! Former of the human race! This is one of the pursuits, this one of the engagements, which thy reasonable creatures call, and prosecute as Pleasure!

But, if such be the present enjoyment it affords, let us consider the end. Who can wonder, that amidst such a scene as that to which we have just referred,—that amongst minds so disturbed and agitated, Disputes and contentions of the most boisterous and rancorous kind should arise, and consequences the most fatal ensue?—Hence, full often the bloody and barbarous Duel finishes what the Gaming Table begun; and everlasting death and ruin seals the eyes of the man, slain by the hands of his friend; in the pride of youth perhaps;—perhaps the sole support and great expectation of some honourable house; but now, cut down and destroyed in one rash moment, and sent to his last fearful account with all his sins in deepest aggravation on his head!—But of this accursed practice of Duelling, we will take an occasion to speak more fully in the next Discourse.

If an evil of this kind be avoided, yet, how often is death the consequence in another way ! How often have repeated losses in high life, as well as low, led men to practices which have proved most fatal to them ! Hence Forgery, and other iniquitous modes of cheating mankind ; and hence the bold adventurer, stung by desperation, void of all resource, too much enfeebled to labour, too proud and arrogant to stoop to any low and honest means of supplying his wants, falls forth to repair his ruined fortunes on the road, or in the streets, by preying on the fortunes and the security of others !—Till at length, stopped in his wretched career, an ignominious punishment delivers society from the pernicious burden of the Gamester and the Robber !

But there is yet a case more deplorable than any of the foregoing, where Death comes, arrayed indeed in all its terrors ; and the most distant prospect of which ought to make You shudder, (my young friends) and fly with horror from the very appearance of the Vice we are decrying ! The case I mean, is, when ruined fortunes, broken mind, upbraiding

friends, and self-convicting conscience, suffer the harrowed, overwhelmed, desperate wretch no longer to support the torturing load of existence: when, unable by any means to supply himself or his family—(For “dig he cannot, and to beg he is ashamed;”)—when, finding no resource in his mind from principles of religion; (all of which, thanks to his loose companions and abandoned associates, he has long since exchanged for the more flattering system of darkness and infidelity)—when, in this horrid pitiable situation, Lo! he plunges by his own trembling hand,—plunges into the awful presence of an avenging God, and the miseries of eternity, to avoid the consequences of his own imprudence and guilt in this world! Fancy shudders at the representation!—Think then with yourselves, what must be the situation of those interested in such a man’s welfare! Think with yourselves, what must be the situation of his wretched Parents, if they yet unhappily survive, to be the witnesses of this dismal disappointment of all their affectionate hopes! Think, if connected with a Family, what must be the situation of his distracted Wife,

thus to behold the object of her tenderest regard, weltering in his blood,—that blood flowing from his own unfortunate hand! Herself deserted and undone! her fortune wasted and gone with her miserable husband! and she herself, with her weeping infants around her, left to desolation and contempt, to beggary and to shame!

These are thy triumphs, oh thou infamous and destructive Vice! And yet, as if in despite of divine and human laws, of every just and proper feeling, of every amiable and excellent Virtue; yet dost thou prevail; and, unterrified by consequences, unmoved by the calls of honour, of justice, and of truth, High and low, the noblest and the meanest bow at thy shrine; degrade and ruin themselves!—Still they Game on, and still they are undone!

Oh, my young friends! Could I but prove like a guardian angel to preserve you from this most pernicious of Vices;—Could I but set its mischiefs and its miseries in their true point of view;—Could I but engage you

now to renounce it, and to form the strongest resolutions against its future allurements; how blest, how successful should I think my endeavours! And be well assured, that from the practice no true pleasure can ever flow; real misery, and consequences the most disquieting and distressful must always flow, if haply you escape those extreme and fatal ones we have enumerated.

It is not possible however for any man to say, how far he will go, and no farther; what consequences shall or shall not follow, if once he commences a lover of Gaming: for, as no fortune is sufficient to supply its hazard, so the greatest fortune may as speedily be dissipated and destroyed by its perilous chances, as the least. Indeed, the natural and almost unavoidable evils are so many and so dreadful, that no wise man would run the danger of encountering even the smallest of them, were he certain (which he never can be) of avoiding the greatest. And would any reasonable man pursue that as a Pleasure, which in every view is incapable of giving real satisfaction; but which may possibly in-

volve the total ruin of himself,—his soul and body—his family and dearest connections? But, even granting that such total ruin, and such severe miseries should be avoided; granting that even success should attend; yet, can that success be adequate to the “Constant anxiety and agitation of passions,” which is inseparable from the practice; or can that success be in any respect satisfactory to a mind of the least feeling or generosity, when it reflects, that a friend, perhaps an intimate, is the sacrifice to that success, and that its own good fortune is raised upon the ruin and entire overthrow of another? Thus even success, in this case, is pain and bitterness: What pain and bitterness must then accompany the want of success, and the ruin of fortune and family!

Think with yourselves, my young friends, if your parents yet live, with what anguish it would pierce their aged and affectionate hearts, to see you the dupes of a Vice, which inferred much more than a probability of your total ruin; perhaps of your speedy and ignominious death; and, most likely, a dissipa-

tion of all that happy patrimony, which they with so much care have treasured up for your future honour and comfort ! Think, if those dear Authors of your birth are no longer in being, how it would wound their spirits even in the realms of blessedness, if they could be conscious that you had dissipated, amidst false Friends, Sharpers, and Knaves, so shamefully and dishonourably dissipated the patrimony they left you ! Your good Hearts, touched with filial gratitude and love, will, for those Parents' sake, living or dying, spare them the inexpressible pain of such consequences ; spare yourselves the pungent remorse of such reflections.

Happy too in future connections, as Husbands, as Parents yourselves, you will avoid this cruel and destructive Vice, which can eradicate, or at least suspend, all the tender and social affections ! God forbid that it should ever thus tyrannize over any of you ! God forbid, that, deaf to the pathetic and affectionate call of the faithful Wife, to the pleadings and almost irresistible tears of beloved Children, you should burst from these,

and desert domestic peace and undissembled friendship, for tumultuous agitation, and the society of selfish, crafty, ruinous Villains ! Oh picture to yourselves for a moment, a young man, happy in the Wife of his choice ; happy in sweet and much-loved Infants around him ; happy in all his domestic connections, esteemed by his friends, and easy in a plentiful fortune ! Picture to yourselves this young man, deluded by some false and pretended Friend to the infernal society of Gamesters, and at length duped and deprived by them of all his fortune, and so of all his comforts ! With what an eye of anguish and of horror must he now look on what before gave the sweetest consolation to his sight ! Can the bosom of that Wife, where once he found perpetual peace and joy, now afford other than the keenest distress ?—He has undone that Wife ! Can those Babes, whose innocent prattlings once were music to his ears, now do other than pierce his very soul with their cries ?—He has undone those Babes ! Friends, dwelling, all things are misery to him ; nor can a ray of satisfaction beam into his benighted mind ; where the consciousness, the

dreadful consciousness that his own Vice and Folly have wrought all this ruin, haunts him for ever, and murders all repose!

You would not, my young friends, be a wretch like this? Then avoid, like Death and the Grave, the least approach to that Vice, which indulged, may probably lead to such fatal consequences. Nor let the pestilence of ill-example blast you with its dire contagion, and induce you, through the fear of singularity, to fall a slave to a practice so infamous, so pernicious! It is a precept of your God, that “you should not follow a multitude to do evil;” and though that multitude be composed even of the highest ranks in life; though it should unfortunately happen even that they, whose exalted stations should lead them to propose better examples to those beneath them, are of this multitude; that even many of those who are called upon to unite “in forming the laws,” should themselves be transgressors of the laws; though it should happen, that even the greatest and the highest, and those, on other accounts the most respectable, should un-

happily endeavour to sanctify the practice by their own pursuit of it ; Yet remember, this can never alter the nature of things, or render that practice less blameable or less pernicious. It is, no doubt, a great misfortune to those in the inferior orders of life, when their superiors set such examples : However, in a case like this, there is only the greater need of more caution, and more fortitude. Every good man is then called forth, whatever his station, to bear his testimony against a proceeding so ruinous to his country ; and Singularity will ever be esteemed a Virtue, when Vice, when such a gigantic and enormous Vice more particularly, is in fashion !

But, my young friends, whatever may be in fashion, or whatever those who deem themselves the Politer World may judge, you have a certain rule whereby to direct your conduct ; and that rule is, “ Reverence yourselves, and the peace of your own minds. ” And, while fully ascertained that no tumult or agitation of passions can ever be consistent with the dictates of religion and the laws of self-government, on this view determine never to play where Avarice can in the least tempt

you ; can cause the smallest agitation of mind, or disturb and ruffle in the minutest degree, the evenness and serenity of your temper. For if these effects ensue, though the more fatal ones are avoided, Play, at the lowest rate, becomes criminal ; and it is unpleasing to remark, how unhappily the passions are agitated, how much the temper is often betrayed, where mere amusement is, and can only be designed. It should be our care diligently to guard against such evils ; it should be more especially the care of that softer Sex, from whose gentleness of manners, and sweetness of temper, we naturally expect the highest and most soothing comforts of life. They will, therefore, give us but poor expectations of such comfort ; they will necessarily defeat their own designs, and injure their own interests, if they discover, at the table of Amusement, tempers ill adapted to social felicity : Much more if they discover a disposition for, and attachment to, Gaming ; which, however odious and pernicious in Men, has effects much more odious and pernicious in their Sex ; involving, among other losses, the loss of that, which ought ever to be.

dearest in their estimation,—the loss of Virtue and of Honour; at the same time that it tends utterly to diminish and to cloud those personal Graces, by which they are formed to attract. For a sight most unpleasing, though sometimes to be seen, is a face, stamped by Heaven with every angelic beauty, and winning charm, yet paled by long anxiety over the midnight Game, and dimmed and darkened with every furious passion which anxious hope and dread can paint in strong colours on the solicitous brow!

But I forbear; not only as my more immediate concern is with those of my own sex, but because I would hope those of the other are neither so much addicted to this Vice, nor will by any means break through the laws of Reason and of Self-interest to pursue it; thus forfeiting either the character of good Wives and good Mothers, or, if single, leaving themselves no chance to become either. For, who in their right senses would take a Female Gamester to their family and embraces?—Let one word, however, of friendly caution be just suggested, that no great foun-

lation of domestic comfort can on either side be laid, if the rage even for the Amusement, not the Vice, of Play prevails; and if that rage be indulged to excess by either party, to the extreme waste of that most precious of all human possessions, Time; to the neglect of better and more important duties; and to the uneasiness and lassitude of the mind, if by chance deprived of so wretched and trifling a dissipation.

Thus, my young friends, I have given you a general prospect of the mischief and miseries of the Vice of Gaming: Your own good sense and reflection will easily lead you to enlarge upon a variety of particulars, which I have but just hinted, or to which what I have hinted may lead. I have endeavoured to distinguish, as clearly as I could, between the Vice and the Amusement; have shewn where the Amusement, as such, becomes a Vice, and where the Vice is peculiarly dangerous and destructive. And I flatter myself, that if you see it in its just and reasonable light, you will think it truly one of those "false Pleasures," of which I have hereto-

fore given you the characteristics, and which I would wish to develope, in order to preserve you from their snares and their ruin.

However, as the close of what I have to urge respecting these Pleasures; as a lively example to confirm the truth of all I have advanced; as a full proof of the “ mischiefs and the miseries,” which I have asserted to be the consequences of them; You will permit me to deliver to you, from the pen of a nervous and affecting writer *, “ An account of the last hours of A MAN OF PLEASURE; a person of high birth, and high spirit; of great parts, and strong passions; every way accomplished; not least in iniquity. His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife: His Gaming, love of pleasure, and great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.”

“ The sad evening before he died (says our Author) I was with him: No one was there but his physician, and an Intimate, whom he loved, and whom he had ruined!

* Dr. Young.

SERMON XHI. 283

At my coming in, he said, "You and the physician are come too late! I have neither life nor hope. You both aim at miracles: You would raise the dead."

Heaven, I said, was merciful.

—"Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless and to save me? I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I pluck'd down ruin."

I said, "The blessed Redeemer—"

"—Hold, hold! you wound me!—That is the rock on which I split.—I denied his name."

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck.—Then, with vehemence,—

"Oh, Time, Time! It is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How

art thou fled, for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; tho' an age were too little for the much I have to do."

On my saying, We could not do too much;
That Heaven was a blessed place:

—"So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'Tis lost!—Heaven is to me the severest part of Hell!"

Soon after I proposed prayer!

"Pray you that can, I never prayed: I cannot pray.—Nor need I. Is not Heaven on my side already?—It closes with my Conscience: Its severest strokes but second my own."

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this, (Who could forbear? I could not) with a most affectionate look, he said;

"Keep those tears for thyself: I have undone thee.—Dost weep for me?—That's cruel. What can pain me more?"

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him :

“ No, stay :—Thou still may’st hope ; therefore hear me. How madly have I talk’d ? How madly hast thou listened and believed ! But, look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This Body is all weakness and pain ; but my Soul, as if stung by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason ; full mighty to suffer : And that which thus triumphs within the jaws of Mortality, is, doubtless, immortal :—And as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could afflict what I feel !”

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of Nature ; when he thus, very passionately,

“ No, no ! Let me speak on : I have not long to speak.—My much-injured friend ! My soul, as my body, lies in ruins ; in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse

for the past throws my thought on the future: Worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past!—I turn, and turn, and find no ray.—Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake, and bless heaven for the flames:—That is not an everlasting flame;—That is not an unquenchable fire.”

How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out,

“ My principles have poisoned my Friend; my extravagance has beggared my Boy; my unkindness has murdered my Wife!—And is there another hell?—Oh, thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from Thy frown.”

“ Soon after his understanding failed: His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun (which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired.”

S E R M O N XIII. 287

I shall not pretend to make any reflections on this mournful narrative: The foregoing discourses will supply sufficient, and the death bed of the profligate abundantly shew what is the end of all his boasted pleasures and pursuits. Leaving it therefore to your own private thoughts, I shall only intreat the Giver of all good gifts, to preserve us from the contagion of loose, immoral, irreligious principles, and from vicious practices, the almost necessary consequence of such principles: To keep us stedfast in the exercise of our holy Faith, and in the paths of Virtue and of Goodness, which that Faith so perfectly inculcates. That, avoiding all the rocks and shelves of destructive Vice and false Pleasure, we may pass through the waves of this world, in the right, the happy, the comfortable discharge of every duty; and so find acceptance, through the merits of Christ Jesus, at his right hand, where there are pleasures, solid, substantial, unfading pleasures, for evermore. Amen!

+ ANECDOTES on Gaming.

(1.) It is related of Mr. Locke, that being invited to a company of the highest rank and first abilities in the kingdom, and hearing Cards called for as soon as dinner was over, he retired thoughtful to a window; and being asked the reason of his seriousness, replied, "He had not slept the foregoing night, for the pleasure which their lordships had given him to expect from that day's conversation, with men of the first character for sense and genius; and hoped his sorrow for his disappointment would be forgiven him." This seasonable rebuke had the proper effect: the game was instantly thrown up, and conversation restored with a brilliancy suitable to the illustrious assembly.

4 (2.) "I cannot (says a late writer) see how a man of quality, sitting day after day, and night after night, at a quadrille or gaming-table, rises superior to the lowest mechanic at similar amusements; unless it be in having a cleaner room, and risking

larger sums; which indeed increase the Expence, but do not lessen the Folly of the action. Cards are the universal mode of a whole people, who pique themselves upon being intelligent and polite: And yet, the best that can be said of them is, that they make people easy, by allowing them to be dull, and superseding the necessity of their being entertaining: So that this species of diversion might not improperly be called, "The stratagem of shallow people, who, unable to supply conversation themselves, would bring down to the same level all that could." For GAMING is a suspension of the understanding for hours together; a stupid attention to a parcel of black and red spots: a continual conflict of the lowest and basest passions; and, if there be some skill required in some degrees of it, the highest of the kind is still so unworthy of ambition, that Creatures who do not discover common sense in other things, often excell in this.—And yet, for this, Gentlemen forego their distinction of Birth and Education; and, forgetful of the debt to their illustrious ancestors, and the demands of the present and

future generations, waste a whole life in the most trifling of amusements, and bury the noblest faculties in the meanest of employments.—For this too, the Ladies pass anxious days and sleepless nights ; deny themselves the benefits of light and air ; grow pale and lifeless, and sacrifice even beauty to the dear diversion : Since, as the poet but too justly remarks,

“ The strong desire shall ne’er decay,
Who plays to win, shall win to play :
The breast where love had plann’d his reign,
Shall burn unquench’d with lust of gain ;
And all the charms that wit can boast,
In dreams of bitter luck be lost !
Thus neither innocent nor gay,
The useless hours shall fleet away ;
While Time o’erlooks the trivial strife,
And, scoffing, shakes the sands of life.”

“ In short, the itch of play (for so, continues our author, I must beg leave to call it) rages like a plague, and depopulates the island of all that is lovely, generous and brave : It is epidemical throughout the kingdom ; it spares neither age nor sex, among

us; and we are become a nation of Gamblers. In this quarter [Bath] the distemper breaks out with all its terrible symptoms, and has absorbed the other entertainments and follies of the place; as the floating humours of the body sometimes settle into a gout, which is a complication of them all. Nothing is to be seen but play, and the preparations for it: Persons of all characters, distinctions and denominations sit down to Cards from morning to night, and from night till morning; and They agree in this particular, who disagree in every thing else."

(3.) "There never was deep play amongst Men only, (says a celebrated genius) but there was a sharper or two in company, who were sure to win. But, besides the fatal consequence of losing at play, it is an illiberal diversion, and brings a Gentleman into the worst and most infamous company imaginable: For a gaming-table levels all distinction; and it often happens, that the footman of yesterday sits next to his lord, and is his equal at a hazard, or a basket-

table. Another disagreeable consequence of gaming is, that most young men begin to play as bubbles; but when they have lost a great deal, often turn cheats themselves, in hopes of recovering it. In short, there would be no end of relating the fatal effects of gaming: It creates quarrels, which often end in bloodshed: It beggars, it disgraces, and affects the character, as well as the purse of a gentleman."

(4.) Nothing is more common at the public places of polite resort, than to see among the other bijoux of the toy-shop, boxes and dice in miniature, fabricated at a high price, for the use of little gentlemen and ladies, by way of initiating them into the science of Gaming. So that, in this instance, if in no other, Juvenal bears his testimony that we still retain some of the old Roman spirit.

— "Monstrant ipsi pueris, traduntque
parentes :

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et
Hæres

Bullatus, parvoque eadem movet arma fri-
tillo."

Sat. 14. L. 3.

(5.) "One of the methods (says Mr. Addison) which I would propose for filling up our time, should be useful and innocent diversions. I must confess, I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions as are "merely innocent," and have nothing else to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them. Whether any kind of Gaming has even thus much to say for itself, I shall not determine; but it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense, passing away a dozen hours together, in shuffling and dividing a pack of Cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases; and no other ideas but those of black and red spots, ranged together in different figures! would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short!"—Spectator, No. 93 *.

(6.) Whence comes it to pass, says Monsieur Pascal, That mankind are transported to such a degree with gaming, hunting, or

* See also Guardian, No. 120.

other diversions, which seem to have taken an absolute possession of their souls!—Not because there is any real or intrinsic good to be obtained by these pursuits; not because they imagine that true happiness is to be found in the money they win at play, or in the beast which they run down in the chase: for should you present them beforehand with both these to save their trouble, they would be unanimous in rejecting the proposal. It is not the gentle and easy part which they are fond of, such as may give them leisure and space for thought; but it is the heat and hurry, which divert them from the mortification of thinking. On this account it is, that men are in love with the noise and tumult of the world; that a prison is a seat of horror; and that few persons can bear the punishment of being confined to themselves.

(7.) In one of the principal cities in Europe lived Lucius and Sapphira, blessed with a moderate fortune, health, mutual love, and peace of mind: Their family consisted of two little darlings, a son and a daughter; they seemed to want for nothing

as an addition to their happiness, nor were they insensible of what they enjoyed; but, animated with gratitude to heaven, they were happy instruments of good to all about them. Towards the close of the summer in 1765, Lucius happening to fall in company with some neighbouring gentlemen, who proposed to waste an hour or so at Cards, he consented, more in complaisance to the taste of others than his own. Like other gamblers, he met with a variety of fortune, (a Variety more seducing than a Continuance either of good or bad) and being warm with liquor, he was inconsiderately drawn in, before the company broke up, to involve himself more than his fortune could bear. The next day, on sober reflection, he could not support the thoughts of that distress which his folly had brought upon his Sapphira, and her little innocents. He had not courage enough to acquaint her with what had happened; and, whilst in the midst of pangs to which he had been hitherto a stranger, he was visited, and again tempted by one of the last night's company, to try his fortune once more. In order to drown reflection, and in hopes of recover-

ing his loss, he flew to the fatal place ; nor did he leave it till he had lost his all. The consequence of which was, that the next day, in undescribable despair, after writing to acquaint Sapphira with what had happened, he shot himself through the head. The news of this deprived the lady of her senses. She is (at least was lately) confined in a mad-house ; and the two little innocents, destitute of parents and of fortune, have a troublesome world to struggle with ; and are likely to feel all the miseries which poverty and a servile dependence entail upon the wretched.

(8.) A young lady who lived in the North was on the point of marriage with a young gentleman, of whom she was passionately fond, and by whom she was as greatly beloved : She was at the same time admired by a person of high rank, but whose passion, as he was already married, was consequently dishonourable. He was determined, however, at any rate to indulge his diabolical lusts ; but the lady being a person of the strictest honour, he was obliged to act with caution, and keep his intentions a secret.

Knowing her propensity to Gaming, he laid a snare for her, into which she fell, to the great diminution of her fortune. This he, fiend-like, took care to have represented with the most aggravating circumstances to the gentleman to whom she was engaged; upon which his friends painted to the young lover the dreadful inconveniences of his taking a Gamester to wife: That poverty, disease, and probably dishonour to his bed, were the likely consequences: In a word, they so managed matters, as to break off the match. The “Noble Villain,” who occasioned the breach between the lovers, notwithstanding, missed his wicked ends: His addresses and proposals met with the contempt and abhorrence which they deserved: Yet, though she preserved her chastity,—a circumstance very precarious among female Gamesters,—the loss of her intended spouse, on whom she had inviolably fixed her affections, threw her into a decline, which, in a few months, put a period to her life.

●(9.) The late colonel Daniel (who took great pleasure in giving advice to young offi-

cers, guiding them in their military functions, &c.) whenever he was upon this article of Gaming, used always to tell the following story of himself, as a warning to others; and to shew that a little resolution may conquer this absurd passion. During Queen Anne's wars, he was an ensign in the English army then in Spain: but he was so absolutely possessed by this evil, that all duty, and every thing else which prevented his gratifying that darling passion, was grievous to him. He scarce allowed himself time to rest; or, if he slept, his dreams presented packs of Cards to his eyes, and the rattling of Dice to his ears. His meals were neglected; or, if he attended them, he looked upon that as so much lost time, swallowed his meat with precipitance, and hurried to the Gaming-table again. In one word, he was a professed Gamester. For some time fortune was his friend; and he was so successful, that he has often spread his winnings on the ground, and rolled himself upon them, in order that it might be said of him, "He wallowed in gold." Such was his life for a considerable time; but, as he often said (and

we may presume, every considerate man will join with him) “it was the most miserable part of it.” After some time he was ordered on the recruiting duty, and at Barcelona he raised 150 recruits for the regiment; though even this business was left entirely to his serjeant, that he might be more at leisure to attend his darling passion. After some changes of good and ill luck, fortune declared so openly against him, that in one unlucky run, he was totally stripped of the last farthing. In this distress, he applied to the captain of the same regiment with himself for a loan of ten guineas; which was refused with these words: “What! lend my money to a professed Gamester! No, sir, I must be excused; for of necessity I must lose either my Money, or my Friend. I therefore choose to keep my Money.” With this taunting refusal, he retired to his lodging, where he threw himself on the bed, to lay his thoughts and his sorrows to a momentary rest during the heat of the day: A Gnat or some such insect happening to bite him, he awoke; when his melancholy situation immediately presented itself to him in strong colours.

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Without money ; and no prospect how to get any, to subsist himself and his recruits to the regiment, who were then at a great distance from him ; and should they desert for want of their pay, he must be answerable for it ; and he could expect nothing but cashiering for disappointing the queen's service. He had no friend ! for he whom he had esteemed such, had not only refused to assist him, but had added taunts to his refusal. He had no acquaintance there ; and strangers, he knew, would not let him have so large a sum as was adequate to his real necessity. This naturally led him to reflect seriously on what had induced him to commence Gamester ; and this he presently perceived was Idleness. He had now found the cause, but the cure was still wanting. How was this to be effected, so as to preclude a relapse ?—Something must be done ; some method pursued, so effectually to employ his time, as to prevent his having any to throw away on Gaming. In this state of mind it occurred to him that the adjutancy of the regiment was to be disposed of, and

this he determined to purchase, as a post the most likely to find him a sufficient and laudable way of passing his time. He had letters of credit, to draw for what sum he pleased for his promotion in the army, but not to throw away idly, or to encourage his extravagance. Thus far all was well; but the main difficulty remained, and he must get to the regiment before he could take any steps towards the intended purchase, or draw for the sum to make it with. While we was thus endeavouring to fall upon some expedient to extricate himself out of this dilemma, his friend, the captain, who had refused him in the morning, came to pay him a visit. After a very cool reception on the colonel's side, the other began by asking him what steps he intended to take to relieve himself from the anxiety he plainly perceived he was in? The colonel then told him all that he had been thinking upon that head, and the resolution he had made of purchasing the adjutancy, as soon as he could join the regiment. His friend then getting up, and embracing him, said! "My dear Daniel! I refused you in the morning in that abrupt

manner, in order to bring you to a sense of the dangerous situation you were in, and to make you reflect seriously on the folly of the way of life in which you are engaged. I heartily rejoice that it has had the desired effect. Pursue the laudable resolution you have made; for, be assured, that IDLENESS AND GAMING ARE THE RUIN OF YOUTH. My interest, advice and purse are now at your command: There, take it, and please yourself with what is necessary to subsist yourself and the recruits." This presently brought the colonel off the bed; and the afternoon's behaviour intirely obliterated the harshness of the morning's refusal. He now viewed the captain in the agreeable light of a sincere friend, and for ever after esteemed and found him such. In short, the colonel set out with his recruits for the regiment, where he gained great applause for his success, which, as well as his commission, he had well nigh lost by one morning's folly. He immediately solicited for, and purchased the adjutancy; and from that day never touched Cards or Dice, but (as they ought to be

used) merely for diversion, or to unbend the mind after too close an attention to serious affairs.

(10.) Sir Richard Steele gives us the following spirited description of a Gaming-Table, as seen by him and Pacolet his aërial friend: "The first thing, says he, that we took notice of, was a Nobleman of a goodly and frank aspect, with his generous birth and temper visible in it, playing at Cards with a creature of a black and horrid countenance, wherein were plainly delineated the arts of his mind, cozenage and falsehood. They were marking their game with counters, on which we could see inscriptions, imperceptible to any but us. My lord had scored with pieces of ivory, on which were written, GOOD-FAME, GLORY, RICHES, HONOUR, and POSTERITY. The spectre over-against him, had on his counters the inscription of DISHONOUR, IMPUDENCE, POVERTY, IGNORANCE, and WANT OF SHAME. "Bless me! said I; sure my lord does not see what he plays for?"—"As

well as I do, (said my invisible companion :) “ He despises that fellow he plays with, and scorns himself for making him his companion.”—At that very instant I saw the fellow who played with my lord, hide two Cards, in the roll of his stocking.—The Nobleman however soon won the game: But the little triumph he appeared in, when he got such a trifling stock of ready money, though he had ventured such great sums with indifference, increased my admiration. But Pacolet began to talk to me: “ This to you looks wonderful ; but not at all to us higher beings : That Noble has as many good qualities as any man of his order, and seems to have no Faults, but what, as I may say, are excrescencies from virtues. He is generous to a prodigality ; more affable than is consistent with his quality, and courageous to a rashness. Yet, after all this, the source of his whole conduct is (though he would hate himself if he knew it) mere Avarice ! The ready cash laid before the Gamester’s counters, makes him venture, as you see, and lay Distinction against Infamy, Abundance against Want ; and, in a word, all that is

desirable, against all that is to be avoided.”
Tatler, No. 15.

(II.) Hence then we may observe, that amidst every other, the ruling passion of the Gamester, whatever his pretensions, is AVARICE. “ But—(as one satirically remarks,—) can He be avaricious, who trusts his wholly property to chance? Who immediately circulates what he wins with a liberality, that has been censured by others as a profusion!—Can Avarice be his motive to play, who, with twenty thousand pounds in the funds, sits down with a man whose whole estate he knows to be in his pocket, and to amount to no more than ten pieces?—The charge of Avarice is indeed so ridiculous and absurd, that I am ashamed of an attempt to confute it.”——“ It has been said, that Gamesters are strangers to reciprocal felicity; and that the happiness of one is produced by the misery of another; the pain of him who loses, being always proportioned to the pleasure of the winner. But this is only the cavil of popular prejudice; If I am

happy, what is it to me who else is miserable *."

(12.) Of all Gamesters, and gaming in general, if it be excessive, we may justly conclude, that whether they win or lose for the present, their gains are not "*munera fortunæ, sed insidiæ*," as Seneca observes; "not fortune's gifts, but baits to ensnare their votaries." The common catastrophe is beggary, in return for the little pleasure and small gains which they now and then derive: Their wives, children, families, parents, friends, suffer for, and deplore their career in the mean time; and they themselves bitterly rue it in the end. "A Gentleman, my particular friend, (says the above-quoted writer who had the honour to be many years an eminent Gamester, being without money, committed a robbery upon the highway, to procure another stake, that he might return to his profession. It happened unfortunately that he was taken; and though he had great interest,—with some persons, who shall be nameless,—yet, he was committed and

* Adventurer, No. 29.

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hanged. This Gentleman's ill-luck continued all the while he was in jail; so that he was compelled to dispose of his body to the surgeons, and lost his money to a friend who visited him in the cells the night before his execution. He appeared however next morning with great composure: No reflection on the past, no anticipation of the future, caused him once to change countenance, during his passage to the gallows: and though he was about to receive death,—so indifferent was he as to what should afterwards befall him, that he bravely refused to say Amen to the prayers * !” What a horrid proof of the total annihilation of all right and generous feelings, produced by a love of Gaming !

* See the Adventurer, as above.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM



